

Night Scenes

*A monthly guide to astronomical
events for July to December 2026*

Paul L Money FRAS FBIS

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NightScenes 2026 Bonus PDF

A monthly guide to astronomical events for July to December

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Background image for this page: The Northern Lights, Aurora Borealis, an amazing display on the night of May 10th/11th 2024 captured with an iPhone 13 Pro Max.

If you want to support the author then why not purchase NightScenes 2027 for next years events.
Full colour book with 200+ events for the year with colour charts, Meteor showers, planetary alignments and much more.

Kindle: <https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B0H7FMT8FQ>

Paperback: <https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B0H7F5T24S>

Introduction

NightScenes monthly guide to the night sky for the year began way back in the year 1999 when the author, Paul, felt there was a need for a UK based *colour* guide. The first yearbook covered 2000 AD and was self printed, so you could argue it was genuinely self published, it should be noted the printer didn't like it one bit! To improve the quality and save our replacement printer, Cupit Print of Horncastle was approached and they subsequently printed every edition until the 2020 edition which was hit by the Covid pandemic. NightScenes thrived even if it couldn't fully dominate the market but it was the pandemic that halted sales as many sales were often at astronomical societies when the author was giving a talk. With physical meetings banned for several months, no sales and so the NightScenes yearbook came to an untimely end.

Yet today there is such an urge for people to look up at the night sky it was time for a rethink and so, after several years, it's now back as Kindle and KDP paperback to see how the land lies, so to speak. In a change to earlier editions, Comets will be excluded as they can be so unpredictable and, instead, the online Astrospace website and NightScenes Facebook page will carry details if anything comes along worth us viewing.

However this PDF paves the way in preparation for the re launch of NightScenes, the 2027 edition via Kindle and KDP paperback. Note that although every effort has been made to ensure accuracy of the events mentioned in the book, the author cannot guarantee clear skies or that every event will be viewable from all parts of the UK/Ireland, especially for northern Britain during the light summer months.

New for this edition: My Journal: 6 pages for your own notes on what you have seen during this period.

Special thanks go to my wife, Lorraine, for her unstinting support, understanding, proof reading and correcting my many mistakes as this edition progressed, any mistakes left are of my own doing! Thanks also to our dear friend Mary McIntyre FRAS for checking over the manuscript for the author.

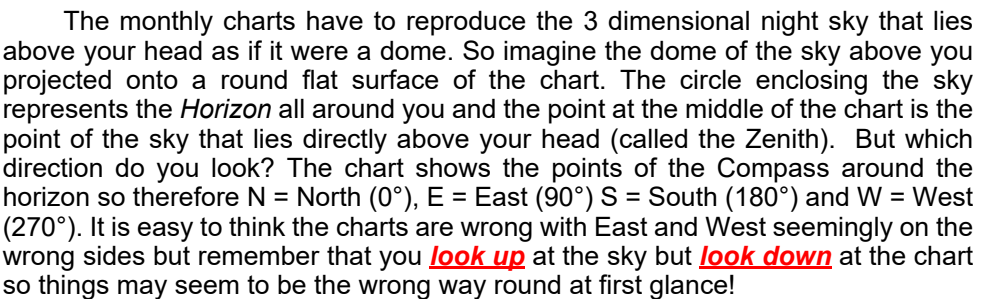
Thank you to my many astronomy friends/societies across the country who supported the pre pandemic editions. Extra special thanks also to the people involved with Stellarium planetarium software (Stellarium.org) for its use in creating the many charts and to Dr. Axel Mellinger for use of his Milky Way panorama in Stellarium for the monthly charts, it is greatly appreciated

The author also give talks (subject to availability and distance, or via zoom) to a wide variety of groups including Societies, Clubs etc, so if you are interested and would like more information then check the details on page 36.

Good observing and many clear skies!

Paul L Money FRAS FBIS

Understanding and using NightScenes



Page 5

NIGHTSCENES - 2026 Bonus PDF

shown with South at the bottom. The stars in the middle of the map will be overhead (at the Zenith) whilst those at the bottom will be in front of you (looking South) and the stars at the top of the chart (i.e. North) will be behind you. The stars on the left of the chart will lie over in the East & those on the right will be in the West.

If you are not sure of your compass bearings then one trick is to note where the Sun is at midday - by then it should be over in the South. Remember to take into account Summer Time when it is in force - so you may have to wait another hour to allow the Sun to reach the proper place in the sky. On the Monthly charts a simulated natural horizon is shown but everyone's circumstances will be different with some having houses, trees, streetlights etc in the way. So occasionally to view some events it might be worth seeking out a better site if an event occurs close to the horizon. The sky appears to rotate from East to West which is why the Sun rises over on the Eastern horizon and sets on the Western horizon, and that's all there is to it!

Other features on the charts include Meteor shower radiant(s) shown in white with simulated trails, from where meteors may appear to shoot out or radiate from, hence the name *radiant* which is usually named after the constellation radiant lies in. Note that there are often other minor showers occurring at the same time and meteors can appear across any part of the sky including what are known as *sporadics*, meteors or fireballs that are not associated with any know shower. The Milky Way (our galaxy) is shown straddling the sky but do note that its brightness has been exaggerated to show it. In the real sky you do need a dark sky site with little or no light pollution to see it properly.

The major constellations with their names abbreviated to the official IAU designations are shown with their brightest stars. Note that the planet markers are greatly exaggerated in size and that for Mars, Jupiter and Saturn real pictures are used for easier identification. If a planet is not shown on the chart this doesn't necessarily mean it is not viewable that night as the chart is set for one specific hour and in the case of Mercury (and sometimes Venus) always lie in the evening or morning twilight so rarely appears on the monthly charts. Other planets may have either set or not risen depending upon the time of year or if they are too close to the sun for safe viewing. The Moon phases (First Quarter and Full) are shown in the position on the **day** of the phase but at the **time** of the chart. This is because sometimes the actual time of exact phase may occur when the Moon is not visible from the UK/Ireland.

The Greek Alphabet used for star designations

As a general rule the brightest star of a constellation is designated Alpha and the faintest is Omega, however there are a few exceptions to this rule!

Alpha α	Beta β	Gamma γ	Delta δ
Epsilon ε	Zeta ζ	Eta η	Theta θ
Iota ι	Kappa κ	Lambda λ	Mu μ
Nu ν	Xi ξ	Omicron ο	Pi π
Rho ρ	Sigma σ	Tau τ	Upsilon υ
Phi φ	Chi χ	Psi ψ	Omega ω

The Monthly sky for July to December 2026

Featuring whole sky charts set for 22:00 GMT / 23:00 BST with meteor shower radiants and ~ paths for the shower peaks unless they are below the horizon at the time of the chart. Planetary positions marked for the first of each month (not to scale!) and positions of the Moon (usually First Quarter and Full phases) if above the horizon during the time of the chart. Additional times and dates when the charts are useful beyond the prime time/date in each corner, note planetary positions will be different on other dates.

Primary Moon phases.

Close encounters between Moon and stars/planets/selected deep sky objects.

Solar System Summary

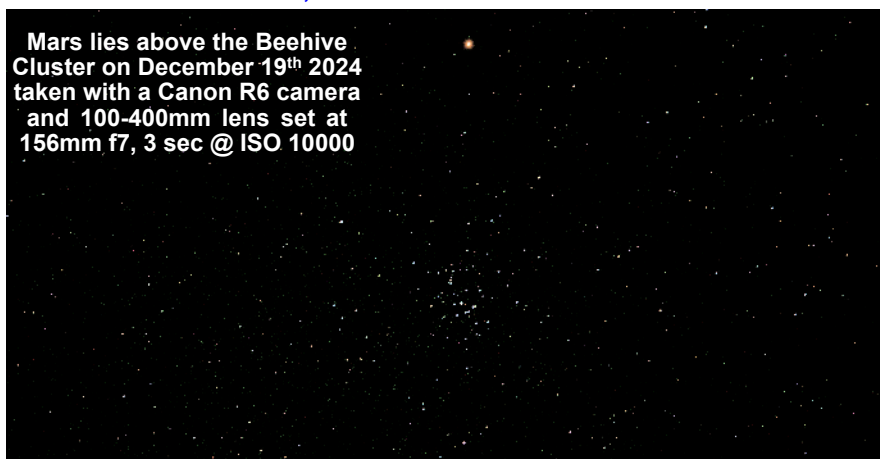
Detailed full colour charts for selected monthly events.

Plus an 'Also look out for' section to conclude each month.



Saturn and Jupiter (separate sessions) taken on Oct 3rd & 4th 2024 with a SkyMax 180 Maksutov, 2x barlow and ASI 224MC camera

**Mars lies above the Beehive
Cluster on December 19th 2024
taken with a Canon R6 camera
and 100-400mm lens set at
156mm f7, 3 sec @ ISO 10000**



NIGHTSCENES - THE SKY FOR JULY TO DECEMBER 2026

Summary of planetary data for 2026

Seasons, Equinoxes and Solstices

Astronomical

The traditional definition with each date marking the start of the season

Note: All times are based on the 24 hour clock

Spring Equinox:	March 20 th	14:46 GMT
Summer Solstice:	June 21 st	09:25 BST
Autumn Equinox:	September 23 rd	01:05 BST
Winter Solstice:	December 21 st	20:50 GMT

Meteorological definition

Spring:	March 1 st to May 31 st
Summer:	June 1 st to August 31 st
Autumn:	September 1 st to November 30 th
Winter:	December 1 st to February 28 th (or 29 th if a leap year).

Planetary Details

Earth:

Perihelion (closest point to the Sun)	January 3 rd	17:15 GMT
Aphelion (furthest point from the Sun)	July 6 th	18:30 BST

Inner planets:

Mercury: Best evening: Mid February and early June in the evening twilight
Greatest Elongation East: Feb 19th / June 15th / October 12th

Mercury: Best morning: second half of November
Greatest Elongation West: April 3rd / August 2nd / November 21st

Venus: Greatest Elongation East: August 15th

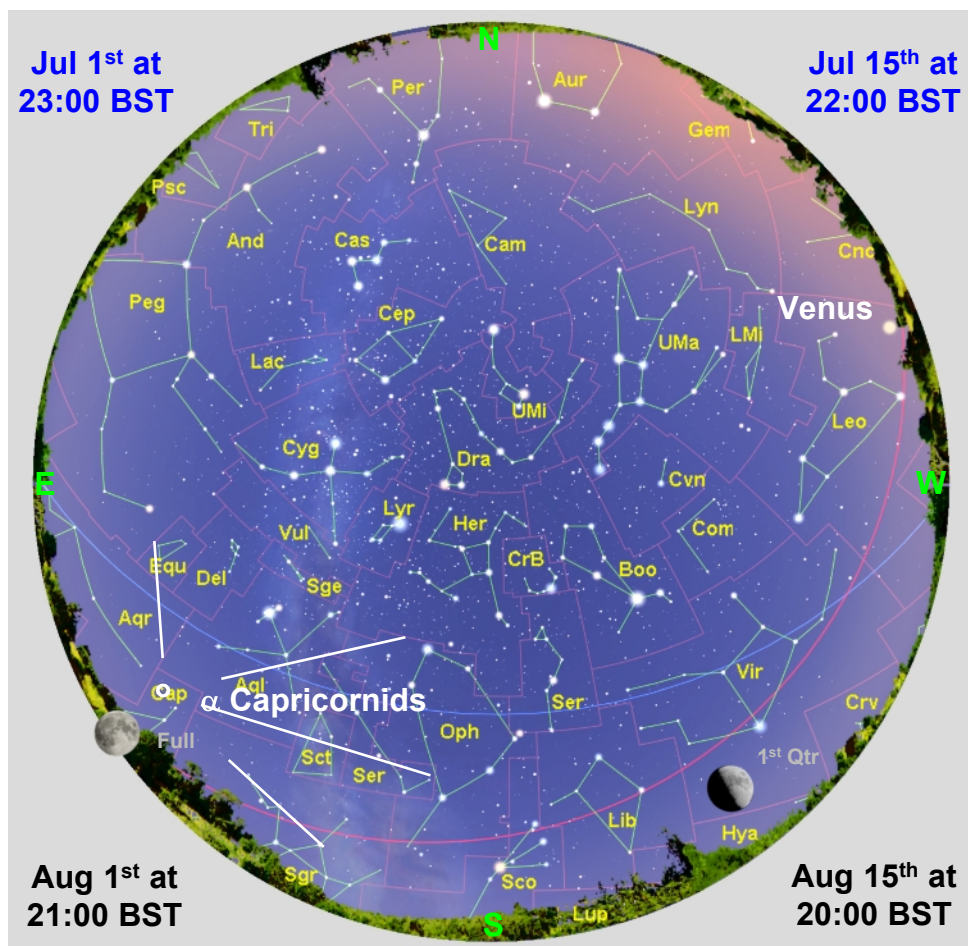
Outer planets: Solar Conjunction & Opposition dates:

Mars:	Conjunction	January 9 th	<i>No Opposition in 2026</i>	
Jupiter:	Conjunction	July 29 th	Opposition	January 10 th
Saturn:	Conjunction	March 25 th	Opposition	October 4 th
Uranus:	Conjunction	May 22 nd	Opposition	November 25 th
Neptune:	Conjunction	March 22 nd	Opposition	September 26 th

Dwarf/Minor planets: Solar Conjunction & Opposition dates:

Ceres	Conjunction	May 15 th	<i>No Opposition in 2026</i>	
Pallas	Conjunction	March 2 nd	Opposition	October 6 th
Vesta	Conjunction	June 6 th	Opposition	October 13 th
Pluto	Conjunction	January 23 rd	Opposition	July 27 th

NIGHTSCENES - THE SKY FOR JULY 2026



The Moon's Phases for the month

New	1st Qtr	Full	Last Qtr
14 th	21 st	29 th	7 th

The Moon lies near the brighter stars/planets on the following dates:

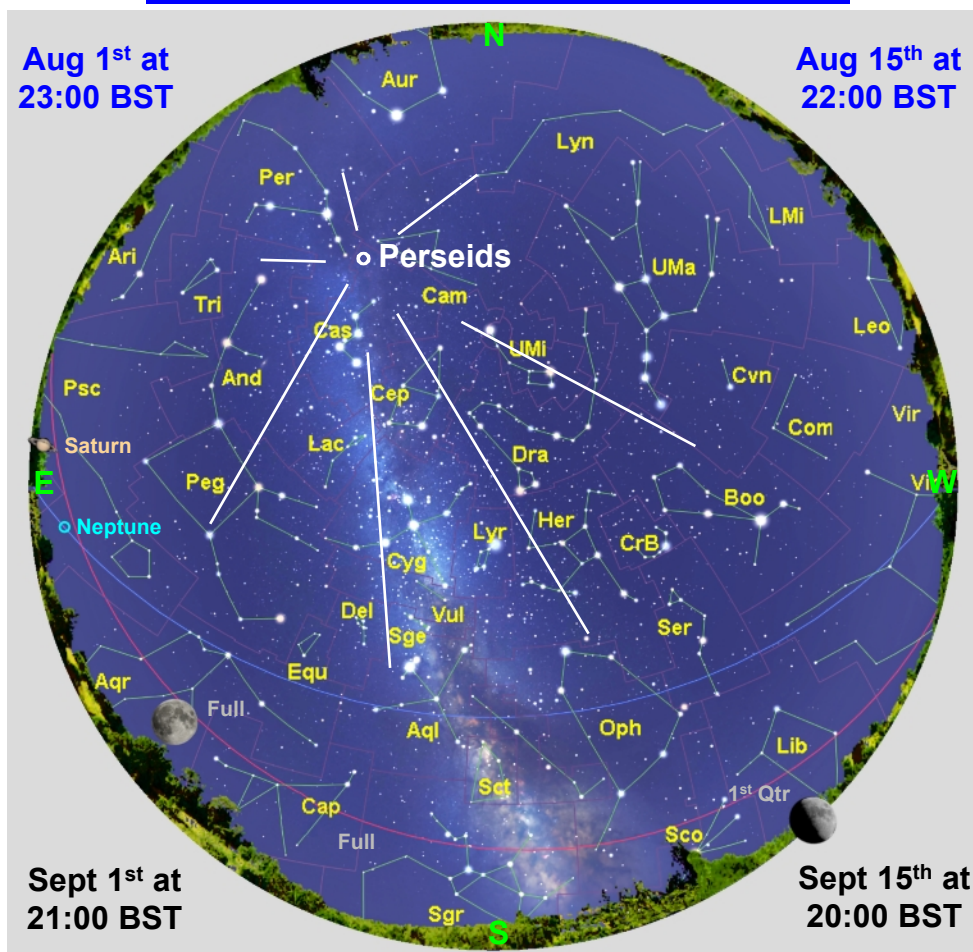
Mornings: Theta & Iota Cap 3rd / Iota Aqr 4th / Lambda Aqr 5th / Circlet asterism 6th / Neptune & Saturn 7th / Saturn & Epsilon Psc 8th / Hamal 9th / M45, Uranus & Mars 11th / Mars & El Nath 12th / **Evenings:** Venus 17th / Porrima 19th / Spica 20th / Alpha & Sigma Lib 22nd / Sigma Lib & Pi Sco 23rd / Antares 24th / Delta & Gamma Sgr 26th / Tau Sgr 27th / Theta & Omega Cap 29th / Delta & Gamma Cap 30th / Sigma Aqr 31st

Earth is at Aphelion (furthest from the Sun) on July 6th when it will be at a distance from the Sun of 152 million km or 95 million miles.

Solar System quick summary

Jupiter slides down into the bright evening twilight and is pretty much gone by the end of the 1st week being in conjunction with the Sun on the 29th. Venus dominates the evening twilight all month. There are no other planets until Saturn and Neptune rise after midnight, lying in Pisces whilst Vesta lies in Cetus. Mars and Uranus are next to rise and lie below M45 in bright morning twilight. Mercury climbs into the morning twilight at the end of the month. The Alpha Capricornids and Delta-Aquariid Meteor Shower peaks on the 30th & 31st and are spoiled by moonlight.

NIGHTSCENES - THE SKY FOR AUGUST 2026



The Moon's Phases for the month

New	1st Qtr	Full	Last Qtr
12 th	20 th	28 th	6 th

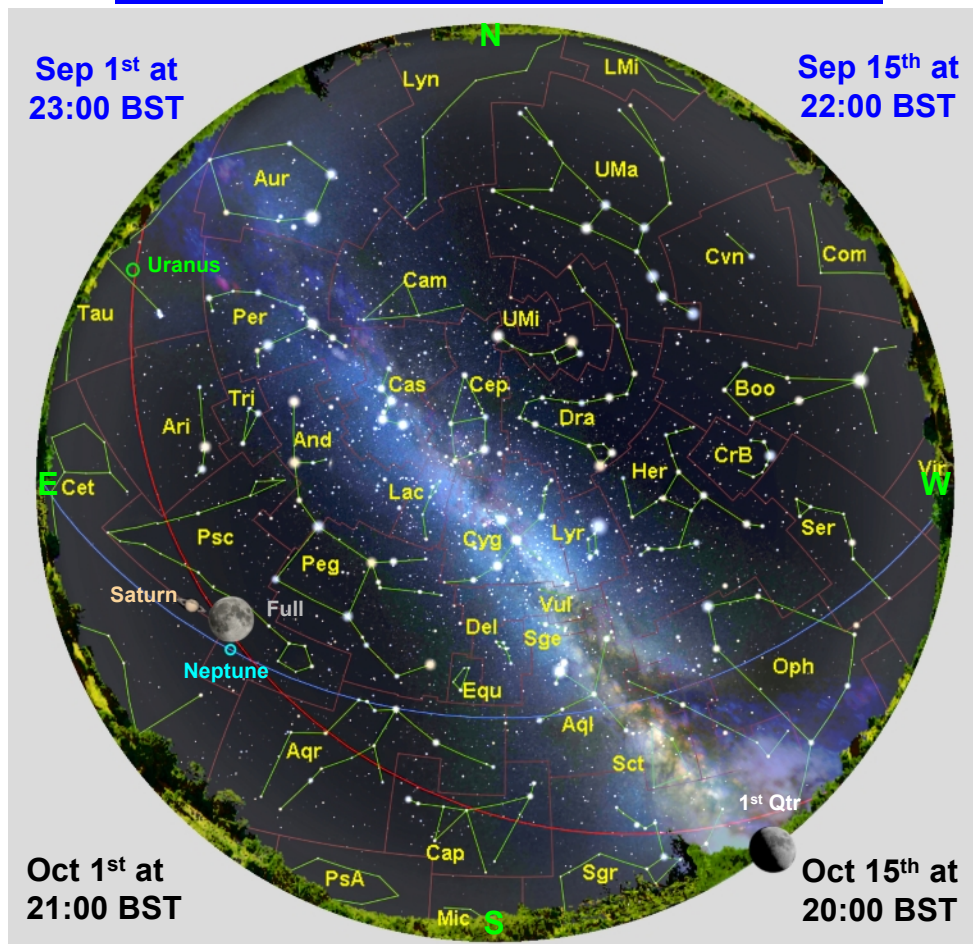
The Moon lies near the brighter stars/planets on the following dates:

Mornings: Saturn 4th / Eta Psc & Gamma Ari 5th / M45 & Uranus 7th / Aldebaran & El Nath 8th / Mars 9th / Mebsuta 10th / Mercury 11th / **Evenings:** Venus 16th / Spica 17th / Sigma Lib 19th / Antares 20th & 21st / Gamma Sgr 22nd / Sigma Sgr 23rd / Iota cap 26th / Gamma Aqr 28th / Circlet 29th / Neptune & Saturn 30th / Epsilon & Eta Psc 31st

Solar System quick summary

Venus remains low down in the evening twilight in the W to WSW all month. Saturn and Neptune are the next to rise, now before midnight. Vesta is the next object visible in binoculars and near to the fishes mouths of Pisces. In the early hours, Uranus can be found between M45 and Aldebaran. Mars moves from the Horns of Taurus into Gemini and is a morning target. Mercury lingers in the morning twilight until just after mid month and on the 15th is in conjunction with Jupiter as the giant emerges into the morning twilight. A large Partial Solar Eclipse takes place for the UK/Ireland on the evening of the 12th for a spectacular sight. August has one of the years best meteor showers, the Perseids on the 12th / 13th and conditions are ideal with the Moon at New on the 12th.

NIGHTSCENES - THE SKY FOR SEPTEMBER 2026



The Moon's Phases for the month

New	1st Qtr	Full	Last Qtr
11 th	18 th	26 th	4 th

The Moon lies near the brighter stars and planets/minor planets on the following dates:

Evenings: Venus 14th / Antares 16th & 17th / 3 Sgr 18th / Delta & Lambda Sgr 19th / Tau Sgr 20th / Theta Cap 22nd / Delta Cap & Iota Aqr 23rd / Sigma & Lambda Aqr 24th / Circlet asterism 25th / Neptune & Saturn 26th / Saturn 27th **Mornings:** Eta Psc 1st / Hamal 2nd & 29th / M45 3rd & 30th / M45, Uranus & Aldebaran 4th / El Nath 5th / Mebsuta 6th / Mars 7th / M44 (occ) & Jupiter 8th / Jupiter & Regulus 9th / Venus (daylight occ) 14th

The Autumnal Equinox occurs on September 23rd at 01:05 BST. Autumn officially begins in the N. Hemisphere whilst Spring begins in the S. Hemisphere.

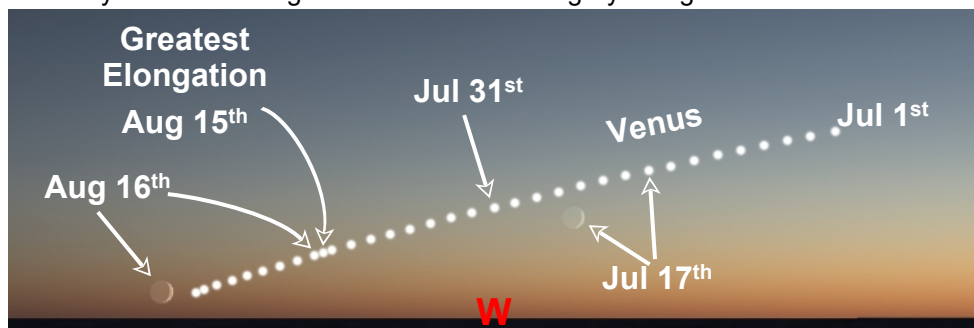
Solar System quick summary

Venus struggles in the bright evening twilight whilst Mercury is too low and not viewable. Saturn and Neptune are becoming easier to view in the late evening with Neptune at opposition on the 26th. Vesta slowly moves away from the fishes mouths heading ~ toward Theta Ceti. Uranus rises before midnight and lies in Taurus and is stationary on the 10th. In the morning sky, Ceres is slowly brightening in central Gemini, visible in large binoculars whilst Mars moves from central Gemini into Cancer and Jupiter moves from Cancer into Leo. The Moon occults M44 on the 8th and Venus on the 14th.

NIGHTSCENES - JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2026



We begin July with the evening twilight sky and a dominant planet: Venus. For now it is the 'Evening Star' and well and truly earning its title. Last month it had a close encounter with Jupiter (above) providing a stunning spectacle for those with clear evening skies followed by an even more stunning encounter with the Crescent Moon. It is such events that make viewing the night sky so memorable and moments like these are often shared by astronomers and the public alike on social media as the author did with the above images. Jupiter is virtually lost in the solar glare but Venus shines brightly calling to us to look at it.



Venus gradually gets lower in the western evening twilight as July and August roll on so the chart above is set for those two months. Being bright (mag - 4.1 at the start of July and brightening to -4.6 by end of August) helps keep it visible even in the bright evening twilight. The chart is set for the Sun to be below the horizon by ~ 7 degrees which is just into Nautical Twilight, as such the sky is light, but improving (getting darker) with every passing minute. It does also mean that Venus sets earlier by the end of August and is very low down in a bright sky.

On July 17th look for a slim Crescent Moon to the lower left of Venus for a gorgeous sight. Venus continues to drop lower in the western evening twilight but technically is still moving away from the Sun until it reaches Greatest Elongation East on August 15th (46°). But by now the ecliptic is quite shallow against our horizon hence it doesn't help with the height of Venus above the horizon. The next evening on the 16th the Crescent Moon again lies close to Venus to its lower left but be quick as it sets rapidly, as does Venus. Try to spot Venus as we move into September as it does brighten a little more to -4.8 by mid month but by then it will be very difficult shortly after sunset.

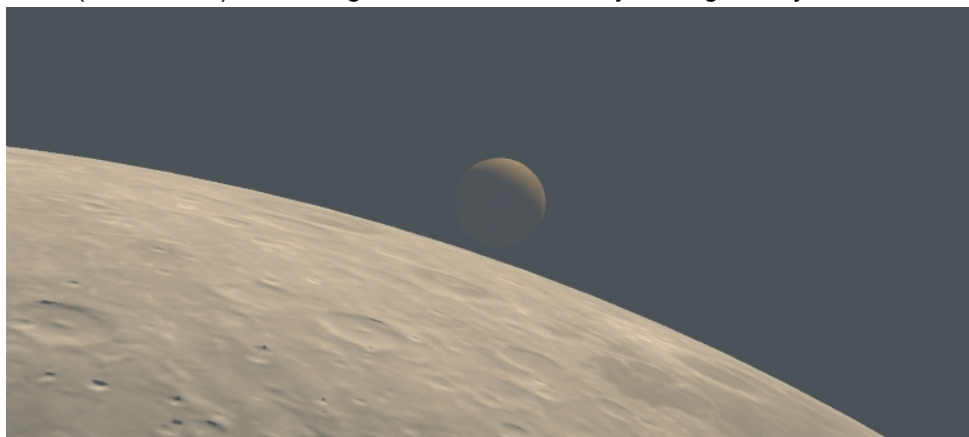
NIGHTSCENES - JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2026



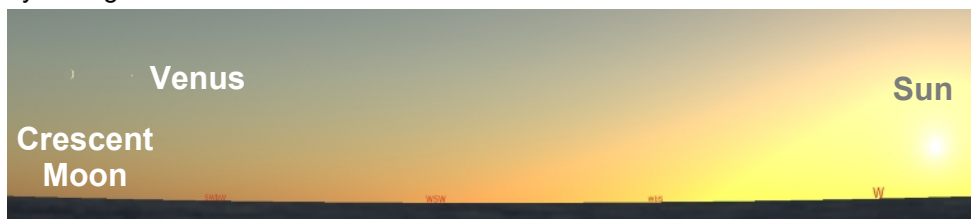
However, on September 14th as the Crescent Moon rises just before 11:00 BST it is occulting Venus. As it climbs higher away from the horizon, Venus slides out from behind the illuminated crescent as shown at left ~ 11:37 BST. Zoom in with a telescope at higher magnification and we find we get two crescents for the price of one - a bargain! The view at below is set for ~ 1 minute after reappearance.

That evening just before the sun sets in the west, look to the SW horizon for the Crescent

Moon (bottom chart), then, using binoculars look carefully to its right and you'll see Venus.

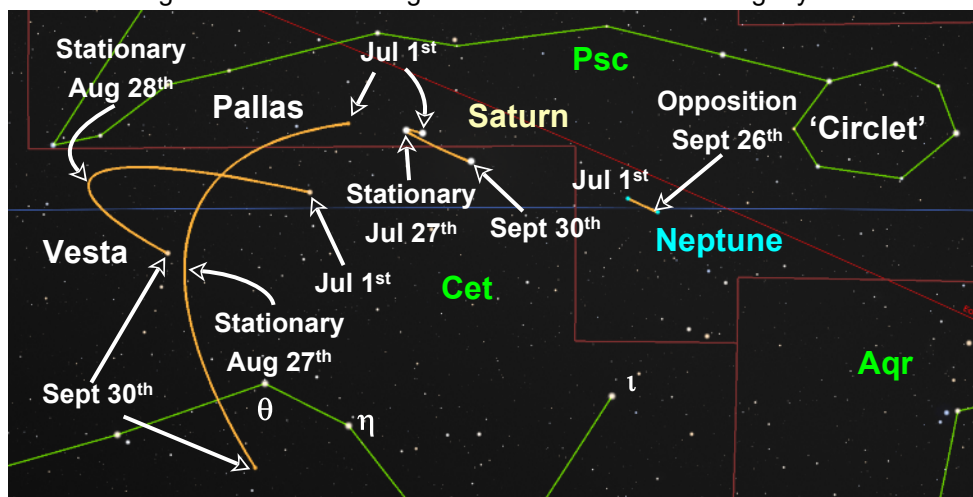


DON'T look farther to the right as you don't want to accidentally get a glimpse of the magnified Sun! After this, Venus becomes lost in the solar glare as it and the Sun set around a similar time. Venus is at inferior conjunction with the Sun on October 24th and emerges into the morning twilight at the start of November so check out the October to December pages for more details. Because the ecliptic is at a quite shallow angle it doesn't just affect Venus but it makes for a very poor September to October apparition for Mercury so don't try looking for it as well as it sets close to sunset too!



NIGHTSCENES - JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2026

Once Venus is gone from the evening skies we have to wait for Neptune, then Saturn to rise later in the night. Both begin July in Pisces, Neptune, not too far from the Circlet asterism. Saturn is easy naked eye brightness at mag +0.7 whilst Neptune requires binoculars or a small telescope as it shines at mag +7.7 pretty much for the remainder of the year. On July 27th Saturn is at a stationary point and after this it begins retrograde motion so will appear to move from left to right against the background stars. It crosses from Pisces into Cetus on September 6th where it remains for several months. Meanwhile, Neptune moves slowly in Pisces and was stationary on July 8th. It reaches opposition on September 26th when it shines at mag +7.7 which is viewable with 7x50 and 10x50 binoculars. It is then viewable all night and over the coming months moves into the evening sky.



Meanwhile we have two minor worlds begin July not too far from Saturn, Vesta and Pallas. Pallas is in Pisces shining at around mag +10.0 so quite faint at this stage so requiring large binoculars or a telescope to follow. It helps that on the morning of July 12th it lies near to 89 Piscium which is mag +5.1 as Pallas steadily moves away from Saturn's vicinity. Pallas is slowly brightening, passing into Cetus on July 20th/21st and is stationary on August 27th when it will be mag + 9.0 and visible in large binoculars. It continues to move southwards and lies 1/3 of the way from Theta (θ) Ceti to Zeta (ζ) Ceti on September 19th as it heads towards opposition early in October.

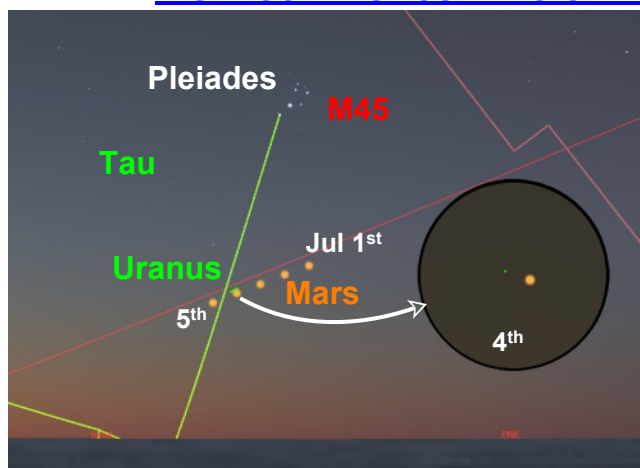
Vesta is much brighter and easily visible in binoculars as it begins July at mag + 7.6 so a little brighter than Neptune! On the chart it appears tit and Pallas cross paths but they won't be near each other at all. Vesta is brightening as it too reaches opposition in October. By the end of September it will be mag +6.2, technically naked eye if you have very dark skies, no light pollution and no Moon in the sky, oh and good eyesight!

This whole region begins low down in the early morning in July but gradually as the nights begin to pull in, this region rises earlier and in a darker sky too as we head towards the end of September making it much easier to seek out the planets, minor worlds and the stars/constellations featured on the above chart.

Next is Mars and Uranus. They are just emerging from the solar glare and entering morning twilight. This makes Uranus quite difficult at first as it is mag +5.8 against a bright background sky but help is at hand, Mars is much brighter at mag +1.3 and lies nearby at the start of July. It passes close to the green planet on July 4th before quickly moving away. they both lie beneath the emerging M45, Pleiades star cluster, but you do need to have a good clear, uncluttered ENE horizon and be looking around 03:00 BST!

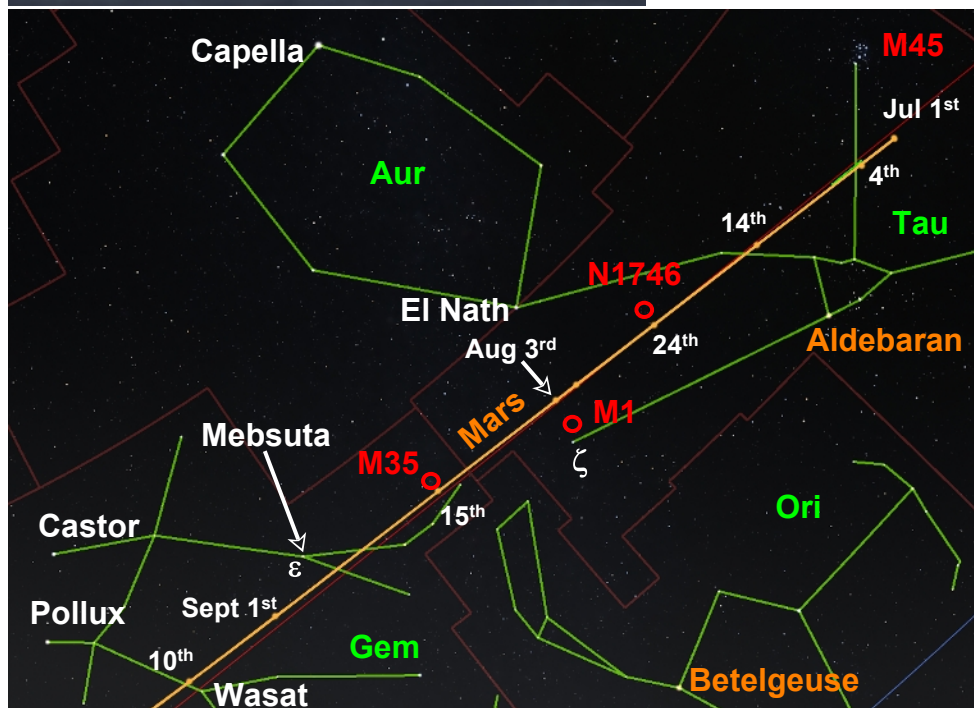
The chart on the next page shows the view set for 03:00 BST looking ENE with Mars and Uranus greatly exaggerated to show up on both the main chart and the inset which is a view you might get with an 8 inch Dobsonian with a 20mm eyepiece giving a magnification

NIGHTSCENES - JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2026



of 60x. Mars quickly catches up and overtakes slower and fainter Uranus. With each passing morning this part of the sky is getting slightly higher and darker so Uranus will improve over the coming months.

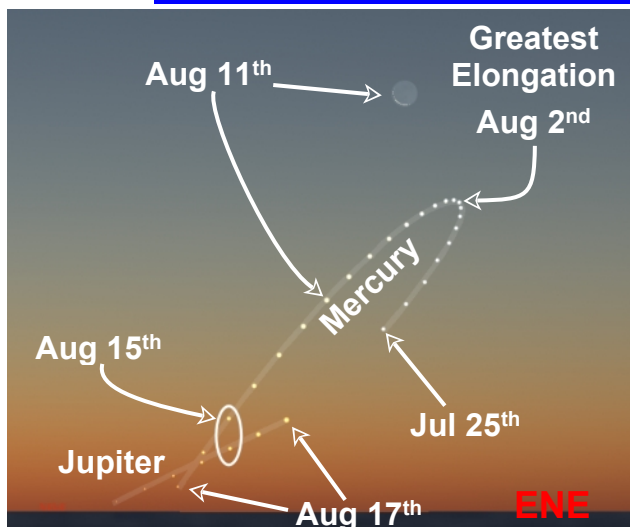
Our chart below shows the wider motion of Mars passing through Taurus and into Gemini but bear in mind the first two weeks of July, Mars and Uranus will be in the morning twilight but the rest of Taurus quickly climbs higher by mid month with Gemini becoming



visible from late July onwards. Mars lies north of Aldebaran on July 14th and begins to cross between the Horns of the Bull, Zeta (ζ) Tauri and El Nath the next morning. It passes south of the star cluster NGC 1746 on the 24th then north of M1, the Crab Nebula on August 3rd. We're still in the morning sky so look out around 03:00 BST. By now Gemini is above the horizon and on August 15th Mars lies south of the star cluster M35 for a good photo opportunity. It then passes below Mebsuta, Epsilon (ϵ) Geminorum on the 27th/28th before heading into central Gemini for the start of September. Mars continues through Gemini passing above Wasat on Sept 10th before moving into Cancer on the 25th. Mars is heading along the ecliptic and will soon reach Jupiter as it emerges out of the morning twilight.

Before we get fully to Jupiter, we take a look at the morning twilight from July 25th through to August 17th. Here we find a good morning apparition of Mercury as it quickly moves up into the morning twilight - a good one if you have an uncluttered ENE horizon of course.

NIGHTSCENES - JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2026



Our chart is set for a fixed time of 04:40 BST so the sky at the start will be brighter than shown here. Mercury always begins a morning apparition fainter at the start so you could say it finishes strongly! I've set the start date at July 25th as I think this may be the first chance to spot Mercury but it will be mag +1.6 which will not be easy against the bright morning twilight but you may spot it with binoculars. Make sure you don't scan the horizon for too long in case you forget the time and accidentally catch a glimpse of the sunrise!

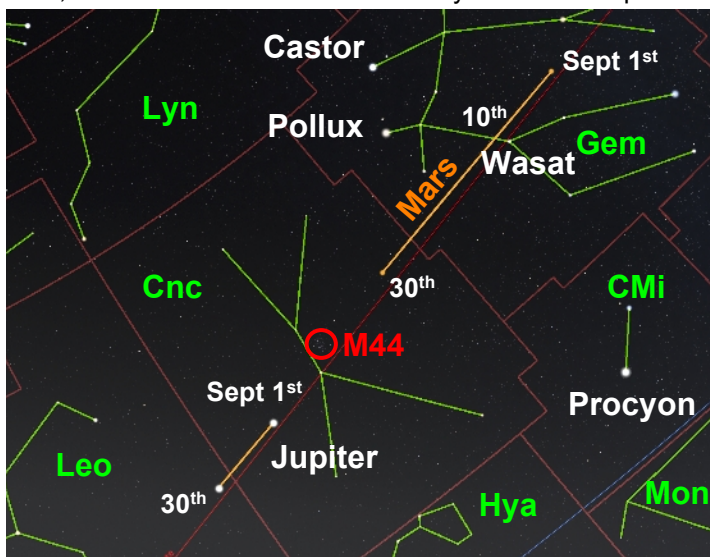
Mercury climbs higher as July ends and is at Greatest Elongation West on August 2nd when it will have brightened to +0.1, incidentally at 04:40 BST 'high' means around 7° above the horizon but it does vary depending on where you live.

It then begins to head back towards the Sun and on August 11th a slim Crescent Moon lies above it adding to the view. Mercury should be mag -0.8 by now and, as it slides down towards the horizon it continues to brighten when, on the 15th, it is joined by the emerging Jupiter. Mercury will be -1.2 whilst Jupiter will be fainter at mag -1.8 so the inner planet will be brighter BUT, as they are so low down and in the haze, this has the effect of making them both look a lot fainter.

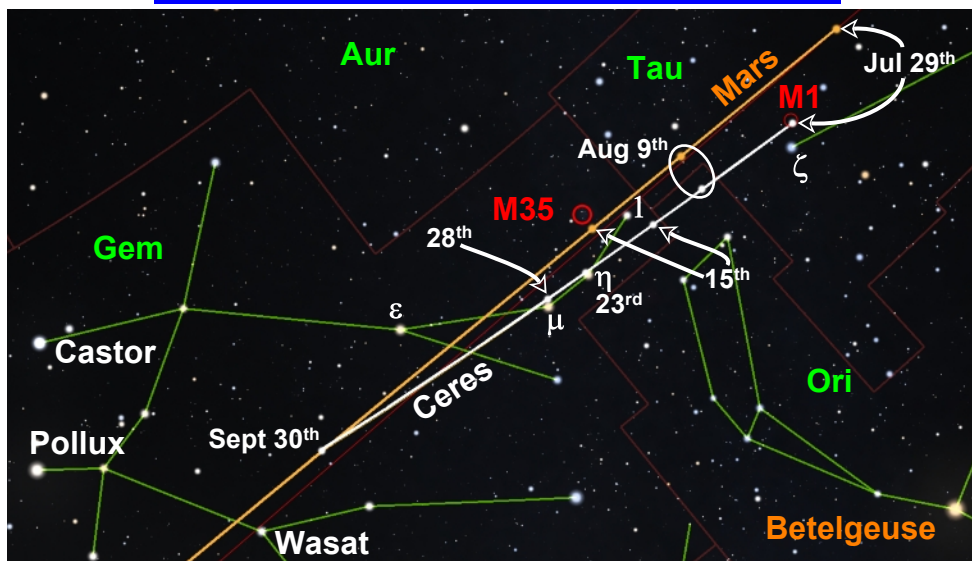
So the question is: how long will you be able to view Mercury for before it's gone and when will be the first morning you see Jupiter?

Now that Jupiter is crawling back out of the morning twilight lets see what's happening with it and Mars in September. Mars first, it is heading for Cancer from Gemini passing Wasat on September 10th then entering Cancer on the 25th. It is clearly heading towards the naked eye open cluster M44, the Beehive Cluster next month. By the end of September Mars will be mag +1.1.

Meanwhile, Jupiter climbs higher into the sky with regards to moving up out of the morning twilight and into darker skies but it's actual motion against the background stars is moving away from the Beehive and Cancer and into neighbouring Leo on September 24th. Note the motion of Mars is much larger than Jupiter because Mars is much closer to Earth at this time compared with the gas giant planet.



NIGHTSCENES - JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2026



Let's backtrack a little as Dwarf Planet Ceres is visible in binoculars and Mars passes it en route to its encounter with M35 in Gemini. We begin with the chart above showing Ceres at mag +9.0 close to M1, the Crab nebula on the morning of July 29th. This is a good photo op if you have a telescope or smart telescope. Look around 03:00 BST towards the ENE for Mars as a guide to finding Ceres. Mars and Ceres are in conjunction on August 9th, Mars at mag +1.3 and Ceres still at mag +9.0. Mars then leaves Ceres behind but they do form a nice triangle with 1 Geminorum on August 15th, the same morning Mars lies near to M35. Mars then races away, passing north of Mu (μ) Gem on August 20th and the rest of its movement has been dealt with earlier. Slower moving Ceres has a close conjunction with Eta (η) Gem on the 23rd then a slightly farther away encounter with Mu on the 28th before heading into central Gemini by the end of September.

August has two events particularly worth looking out for: a large Partial Solar Eclipse (~90%) and the Perseid Meteor shower. This year they are linked by the fact that a solar eclipse can only occur at New Moon which happens to fall on August 12th, the same day as the Perseids.

The view here shows how it looks without optical aid but you **MUST** use a proper certified Solar Eclipse viewer (shown on the next page) or specialised solar film for cameras and/or telescopes. If you use a pair of Binoculars either make filters for both objective lenses



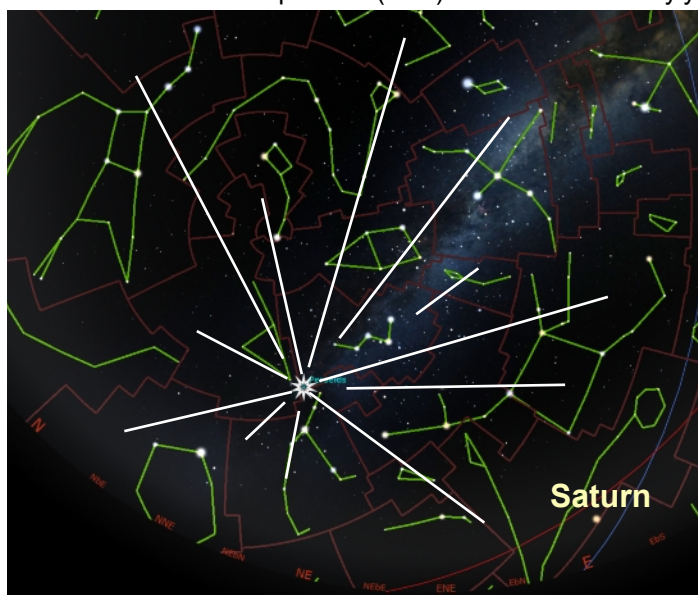
or put the FRONT CAP on the half of the binocular you don't view through. The view above is set for maximum eclipse (90%) at 19:10 BST on August 12th from the authors location in Horncastle. The second close up chart gives an idea of what it might look like through a telescope at the start, mid and end times. For once we have an eclipse at a good time but

NIGHTSCENES - JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2026



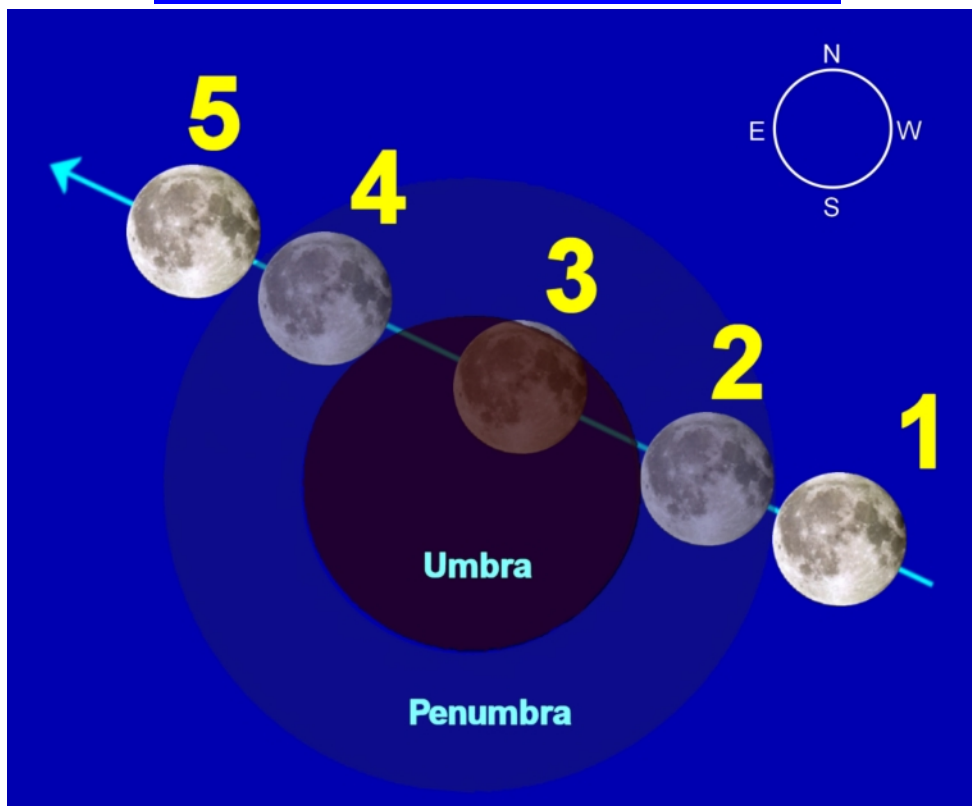
bear in mind that the Sun (& Moon) will be close to setting not long after the eclipse finishes so best to find a good site with a clear Western horizon.

Now onto the best meteor shower of the year, the Perseids. 2026 is a great year for them as the night of the 12th to 13th coincides with New Moon on the 12th so we don't have moonlight to spoil them this year. The August monthly sky chart shows the radiant but on closer inspection the actual radiant on the night of the peak (12th into 13th) actually doesn't lie in Perseus but Cassiopeia instead! The chart below is set for 23:00 BST on the 12th with an idea of where to look for meteors. If you see one, track its path back and if it lines up with the radiant then its a Perseid. Note that there are other minor showers active at this time so the key is that to be a Perseid they have to come from the radiant. The possible perfect maximum no of meteors per hour (ZHR) is ~ 100 but it is likely you'll see around $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{3}$ of that.



The image below is of a Perseid (upper streak) and a satellite tracking below Cassiopeia. Look out for any colour in the meteor streak.

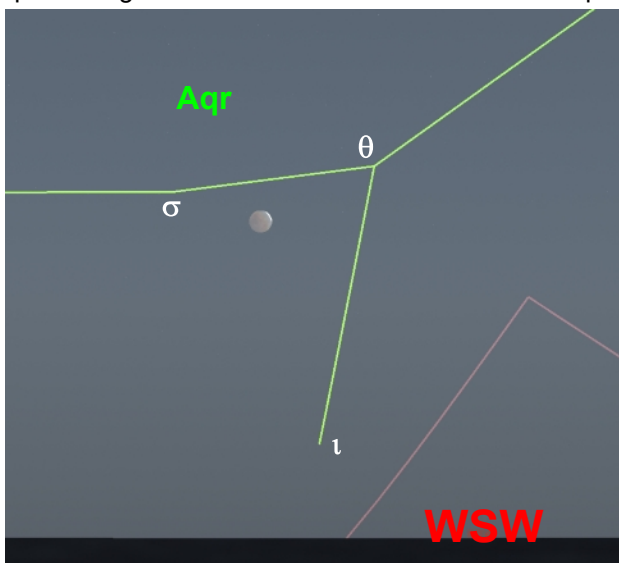




August is a busy month. not just content with a partial solar eclipse and a very favourable Perseids shower peak, on August 28th the Moon undergoes a deep Partial Lunar Eclipse whilst in Aquarius south of Theta (θ). The Penumbral phases are quite faint and fairly undramatic but the deep shadow of the Earth, known as the Umbra will make quite an impression. At **1** the penumbral phase begins at 02:22 BST then at **2** the main eclipse begins as the Moon enters the umbra at 03:33 BST.

Mid eclipse (**3** & chart at right) and greatest eclipsed extent of 93.5% occurs at 05:12 BST however, for the UK/Ireland, the Moon sets before the Umbral phase is over (**4**) at 06:52 BST. For completions sake (**5**) shows the penumbral phase ending at 08:03 BST visible over much of the America's.

For Lunar Eclipses you don't require specialised protective filters or glasses so if the sky is clear then do enjoy it but make sure you have an uncluttered WSW horizon and enjoy early mornings!



NIGHTSCENES - JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2026

Also look out for the following:

July:

- 3rd Moon forms triangle with Theta and Iota Cap (morning)
- 4th Moon lies near to Iota Aqr (morning)
- 5th Moon lies near Lambda Aqr (morning)
- 6th Moon lies below Circlet Asterism (morning)
- 7th Last Quarter Moon forms right angle with Neptune & Saturn (morning)
- 8th Moon lies upper left of Saturn and Epsilon Psc (morning) / Neptune is stationary
- 9th Moon lies below Hamal, Beta and Gamma Arietis (morning) / Venus is north of Regulus (evening)
- 11th Moon lies to left of M45 and above Uranus and Mars (start of morning twilight)
- 12th Moon lies between Mars & El Nath (start of morning twilight)
- 19th Moon lies below Porrima (evening twilight)
- 20th Moon lies to lower right of Spica (evening twilight)
- 22nd Moon forms triangle with Alpha and Sigma Librae (evening twilight)
- 23rd Moon lies between Sigma Lib and Pi Sco (late evening)
- 24th Moon lies below Antares (late evening)
- 26th Moon forms triangle with Delta and Gamma Sgr (late evening)
- 27th Moon lies near to Tau Sgr (late evening) / Saturn is stationary
- 28th Delta-Aquariid Meteor Shower peak (unfavourable)
- 29th Full Moon forms triangle with Theta & Omega Cap (late evening)
- 30th Moon lies above Delta and Gamma Cap (late evening) / Alpha Capricornids peak (unfavourable)
- 31st Moon lies above Sigma Aqr (late evening)

August:

- 2nd Moon lies between Circlet and Neptune as they rise (late evening)
- 4th Moon lies above Saturn (morning)
- 5th Moon forms triangle with Eta Psc and Gamma Ari (morning)
- 7th Moon lies close to M45 with Uranus and Hyades/Aldebaran below them (morning)
- 8th Moon forms triangle with Aldebaran and El Nath (morning)
- 9th Crescent Moon lies above Mars (morning)
- 10th Crescent Moon lies to left of Mebsuta (morning)
- 17th Crescent Moon lies to lower left of Spica (bright evening twilight)
- 19th Moon lies to upper left of Sigma Librae (evening twilight)
- 20th First Quarter Moon lies to right of Antares and lower left of Pi Sco (evening twilight)
- 21st Moon lies to the left of Antares (evening)
- 22nd Moon lies between 3 & Gamma Sgr (evening)
- 23rd Moon lies near Sigma Sgr (evening)
- 26th Moon lies close to Iota Cap (evening)
- 28th Moon lies near to Gamma Aqr (evening)
- 29th Moon lies below Circlet asterism (late evening)
- 30th Moon forms triangle with Neptune & Saturn (late evening)
- 31st Moon lies between Epsilon & Eta Psc (late evening)

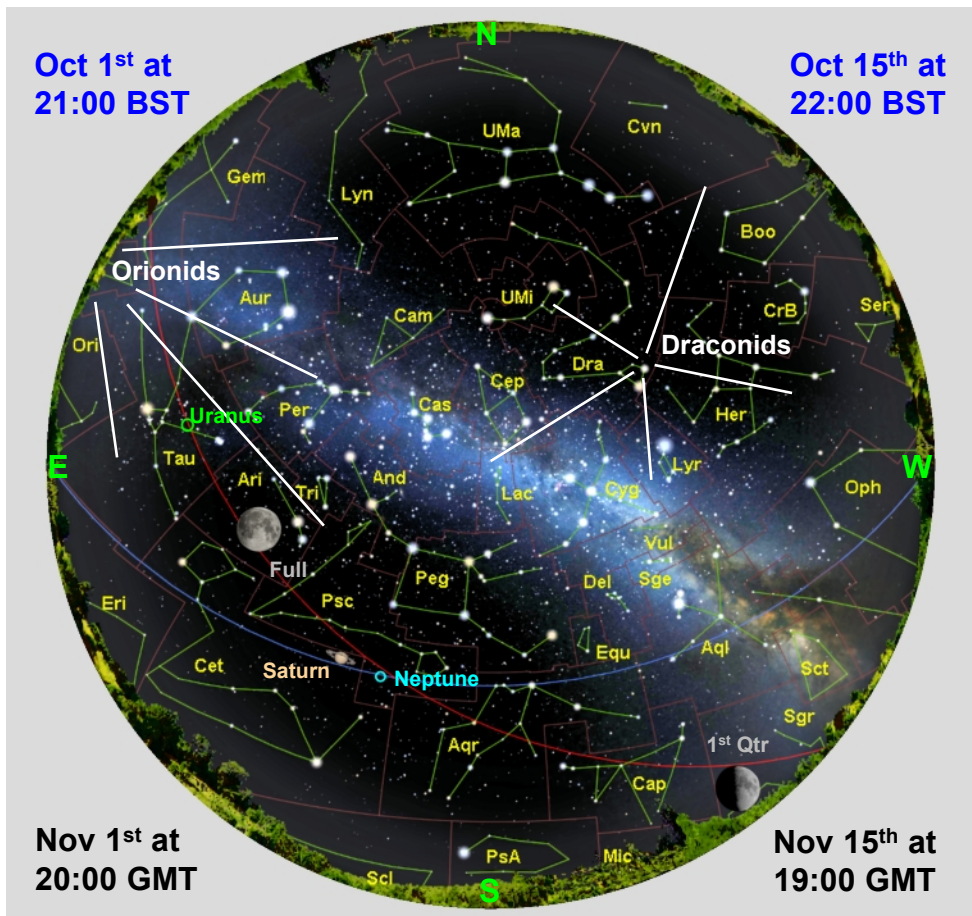
NIGHTSCENES - JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2026

September:

- 1st Moon lies close to Eta Psc (morning) / Venus lies beneath Spica (bright evening twilight)
- 2nd Moon lies below Hamal (morning)
- 3rd Moon lies to right of M45 (morning)
- 4th Last Quarter Moon lies north of Aldebaran and forms triangle with M45 and Uranus (morning)
- 5th Moon lies below El Nath (morning)
- 6th Moon lies above Mebsuta (morning)
- 7th Crescent Moon lies below left of Mars and close to Kappa Cyg (morning)
- 8th Crescent Moon occults northern members of Beehive cluster, M44 with Jupiter below them (morning)
- 9th Slim Crescent Moon lies between Jupiter and Regulus (morning twilight)
- 10th Uranus is stationary
- 16th Moon lies to right of Pi Sco and Antares (evening twilight)
- 17th Moon lies to left of Antares (evening twilight)
- 18th First Quarter Moon lies to right of 3 Sgr (evening twilight)
- 19th Moon forms triangle with Delta & Lambda Sgr (evening twilight)
- 20th Moon lies to left of Tau Sgr (evening)
- 22nd Moon lies below Theta Cap (evening)
- 23rd Moon forms triangle with Delta Cap & Iota Aqr (evening)
- 24th Moon lies between Sigma & Lambda Aqr (evening)
- 25th Moon lies below Circlet (late evening)
- 26th Full Moon forms triangle with Neptune & Saturn (late evening)
- 27th Moon lies to upper left of Epsilon Psc & Saturn (late evening)
- 29th Moon lies below Hamal (morning)
- 30th Moon lies to right of M45 (morning)



NIGHTSCENES - THE SKY FOR OCTOBER 2026



The Moon's Phases for the month

New	1st Qtr	Full	Last Qtr
10th	18th	26th	3rd

The Moon lies near the brighter stars and planets on the following dates:

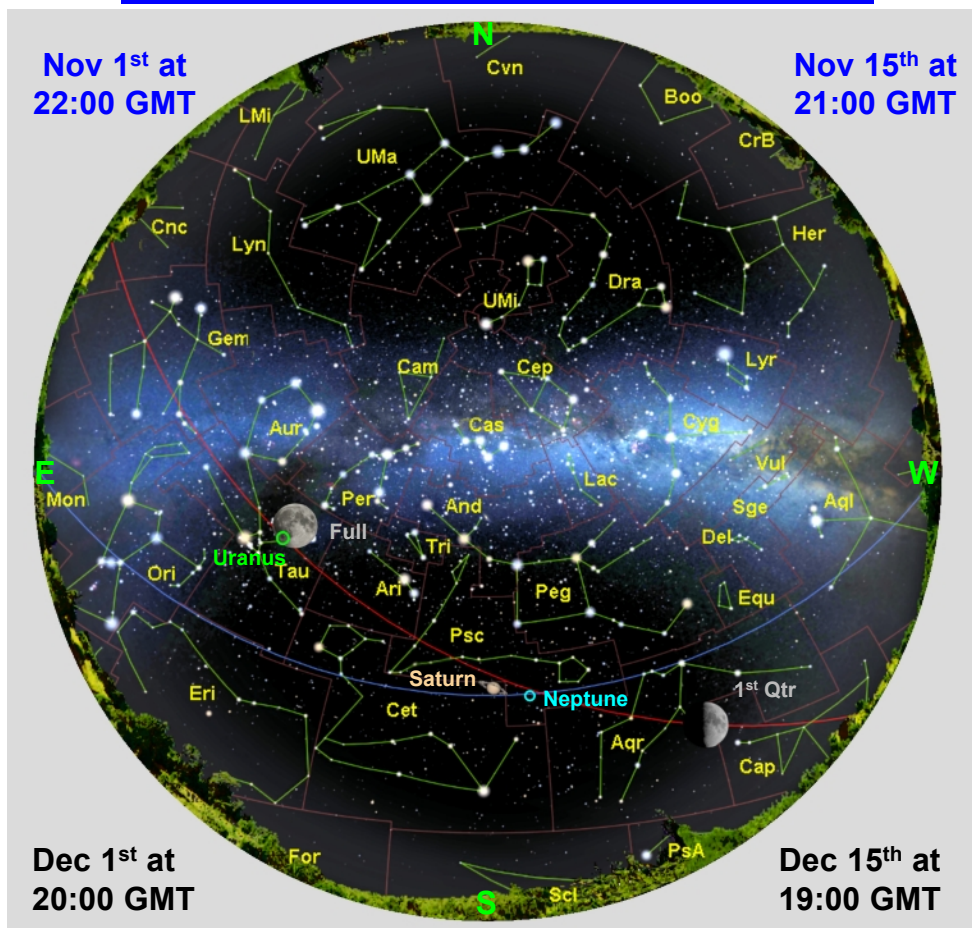
Mornings: M45 & Uranus 1st / M45 (occ) 28th / El Nath 2nd / Mars 5th / Jupiter 6th / Regulus 7th / Castor & Pollux 31st **Evenings:** / Tau Sgr 17th / Gamma Cap 20th / Theta Aqr 21st / Neptune 23rd / Delta Psc & Saturn 24th / Eta Psc 25th / M45 & Uranus 27th /

British Summer Time, also known as Daylight Saving Time, ends on Sunday, October 25th at 2 am when the clocks should be put back 1 hour to give GMT.

Solar System quick summary

Mercury and Venus are lost in the solar glare all month. Neptune was at opposition last month and now Saturn comes to opposition on the 4th so both are viewable all night and relatively close. Minor planets Pallas and Vesta lie nearby in Cetus and also at opposition this month on the 6th & 13th. Uranus is in Taurus between M45 and Aldebaran. Dwarf planet Ceres lies in Gemini and along with Mars and Jupiter are morning objects. Mars passes through the M44 Beehive cluster on the 11th & 12th. For meteor showers, the Draconids peak on the 9th and with no Moon to spoil them they are favourable whilst the Orionids peak on the 21st and are best seen once the Moon has set.

NIGHTSCENES - THE SKY FOR NOVEMBER 2026



The Moon's Phases for the month

New	1st Qtr	Full	Last Qtr
9 th	17 th	24 th	1 st

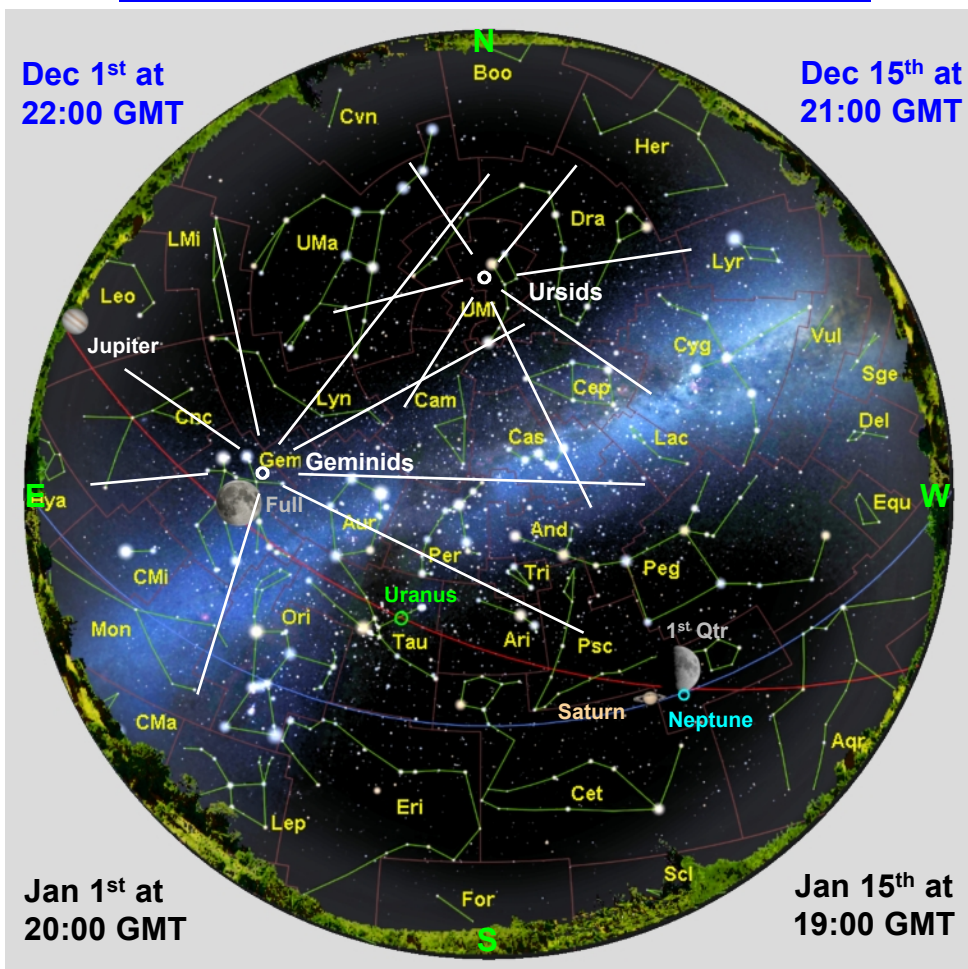
The Moon lies near the brighter stars and planets on the following dates:

Mornings: Mars 2nd / Jupiter & Regulus 3rd / Javijava 5th / Porrima 6th / Venus & Spica 7th / M45 24th / Mebsuta 27th / Kappa Gem 28th / Delta Cnc 29th / Jupiter, Mars & Regulus 30th
Evensings: Phi Sgr 13th / 52 Sgr (occ) 14th / Theta & Iota Cap 16th / Iota Aqr 17th / Lambda Aqr / 18th / Circlet 19th / Neptune & Saturn 20th / M45 & Uranus 24th / El Nath 25th / M44 (occ) 28th

Solar System quick summary

Venus moves up in the morning sky near to Spica whilst Mercury has a good morning apparition from mid-month to the lower left of Venus. Still in the morning sky Mars rapidly passes north of Jupiter on the 16th then Regulus on the 26th. Dwarf planet Ceres lies in Gemini. Uranus lies in Taurus and is at opposition on the 25th becoming visible all night. Neptune & Saturn lie in the evening sky well placed for viewing as are minor planets 2 Pallas and 4 Vesta which both remain in Cetus. The Southern Taurids Meteor shower peaks on the 5th and the Northern Taurids Meteor peaks on the 12th, both favourable. The Leonids Meteor shower on the 17th is also good as the Moon sets just as the radiant rises.

NIGHTSCENES - THE SKY FOR DECEMBER 2026



The Moon's Phases for the month

New	1st Qtr	Full	Last Qtr
9th	17th	24th	1st & 30th

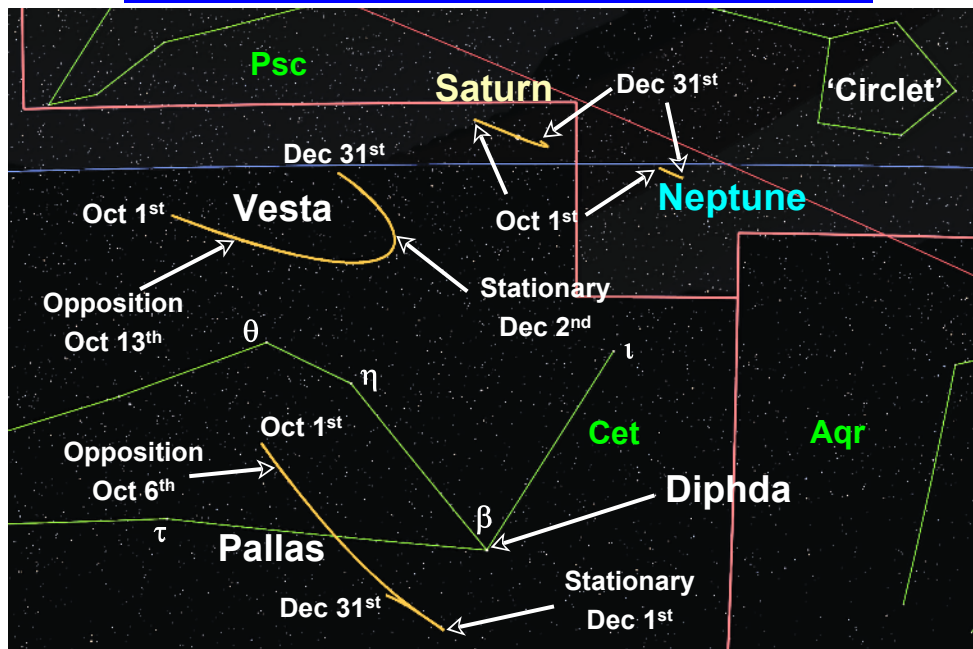
The Moon lies near the brighter stars and planets on the following dates:

Mornings: Mars, Regulus & Jupiter 1st / Zavijava 2nd & 30th / Porrima 3rd & 31st (& Spica) / Venus and Spica 4th & 5th / Mercury 7th / M44 26th / Jupiter & Regulus 27th / Mars & Regulus 28th / **Evenings:** Theta Cap 13th / Delta Cap 14th / Sigma Aqr 15th / Neptune & Saturn 17th / Delta Psc & Saturn / 18th / Eta Psc 19th / M45 (occ) & Uranus 21st / Mabsuta & Wasat 24th

Solar System quick summary

Mercury is visible in the morning twilight for the first week. Venus dominates the mornings moving from Virgo to Libra. Jupiter and Mars are also morning objects in Leo, Jupiter is stationary on the 13th. Dwarf planet Ceres passes under Pollux during the month. Uranus lies in Taurus not far from the M45, Pleiades star cluster and is visible most of the night. In the evening sky we find Saturn dominates and is stationary on the 11th, Neptune is stationary on the 13th whilst Vesta lies to the side of Saturn and Pallas stays in the vicinity of Diphda, Beta Ceti. The Gemind and Ursid Meteor showers peak on the 14th (favourable) and 22nd (unfavourable due to an almost full Moon).

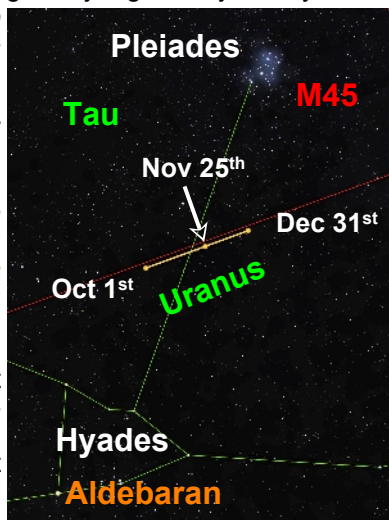
NIGHTSCENES - OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2026



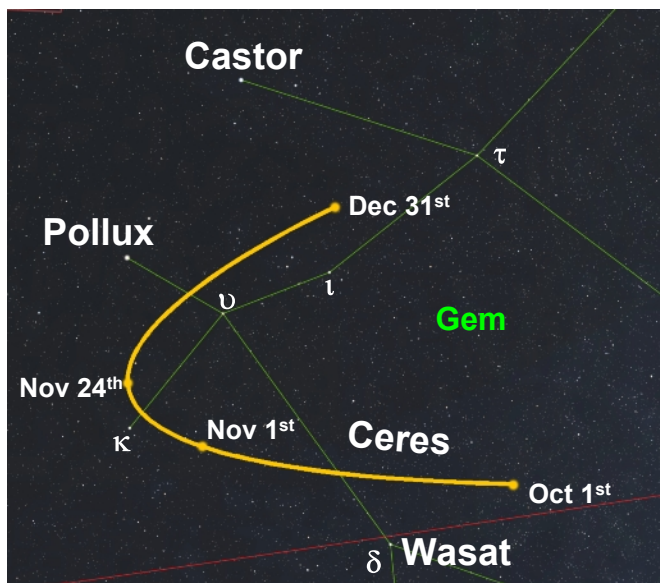
Our first planets for October to December are Neptune and Saturn in the evening sky. Neptune was at opposition last month on September 26th so is now viewable most of the night not far from the Circlet asterism of Pisces. Neptune is magnitude +7.7 meaning it is visible in 10x50 binoculars and small telescopes. Saturn is much brighter at mag +0.3 and lies in Cetus, it comes to opposition on October 4th and so is also now visible all night. Saturn is stationary on December 11th and resumes normal motion whilst Neptune is stationary on December 13th and does likewise.

Also in Cetus we find two minor planets, Vesta and Pallas. Pallas reaches opposition on October 6th and at its brightest of mag +8.4 can be found in binoculars, especially if you mount them on a sturdy tripod. Meanwhile, Vesta, being nearby on the sky, comes to opposition on the 13th and is relatively bright at mag +6.1. This is technically naked eye but you need a good dark sky with no light pollution and good eyesight! They all stay in their respective constellations until the end of the year so their 3 month paths are shown above. Pallas is stationary on December 1st and Vesta is stationary on December 2nd. Saturn fades only slightly as does Neptune but Vesta will fade by a full magnitude and by end of year will be +7.1 whilst Pallas fades to mag +9.1 by year's end. For the first ¾ of 2027 Pallas will be below the threshold for Nightscenes but a separate page for the last three months of the year is included *after* the main monthly notes for 2027. Vesta will be included in the monthly notes for 2027.

Uranus lies throughout October to December in Taurus moving below the M45, Pleiades star cluster. It is in retrograde motion so moving from left to right and is at opposition on November 25th when it becomes viewable all night. It shines at mag +5.6 and is technically naked eye so if you have good eyesight and dark skies why not try to spot it?



NIGHTSCENES - OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2026

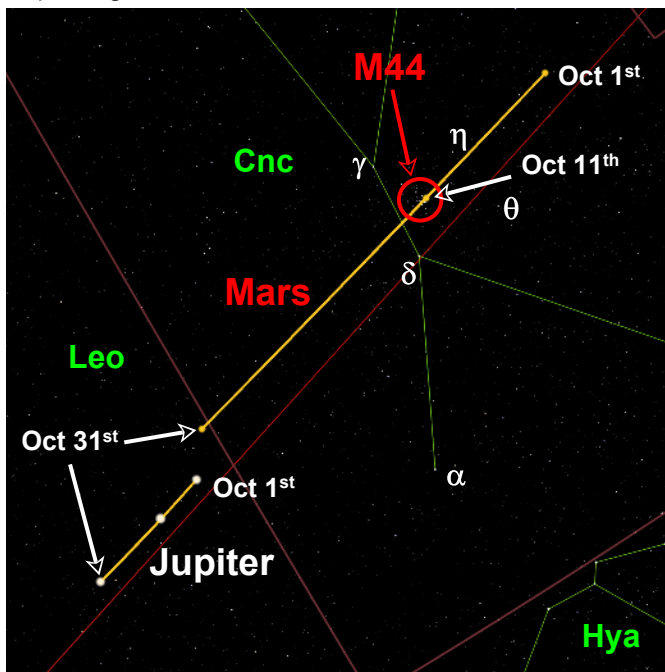


Next up is Dwarf Planet Ceres, the first asteroid to be discovered back in 1801. It spends October to December in Gemini, passing Wasat, Delta (δ) Geminorum on October 12th, then passing Kappa (κ) Gem during the third week of November before reaching a stationary point on November 24th when it will be almost due south of Pollux, one of the Twins (Castor being the other). Up until now it has been moving in a prograde direction but after this date it begins to retrograde and passes between Pollux and Upsilon (υ) Gem on December 12th/13th.

It is mainly a morning target and comes to opposition on January 7th 2027 so is steadily brightening from mag +8.7 to +6.9, Oct - Dec. This makes it an ideal project to follow the brightest of the Dwarf planets either via astrophotography or visually using binoculars or a telescope now and into the new year.

Our next targets are Mars and Jupiter which lie in the morning sky throughout October to December so our charts are set for ~ 04:00 GMT. The motion of Mars against the background stars is too large through this period so we'll split it into October and November to December charts.

Mars races through Cancer passing into Leo at the end of October. Meanwhile from the 11th to 12th it passes straight through the star cluster M44, the Beehive cluster. It is catching up with Jupiter which itself is moving prograde away from Mars but the red planet is moving much faster from our perspective. Mars passes between Delta (δ) and Gamma (γ) Cancri on the 13th but you can't mistake the 'red planet' as it does have a reddish-orange hue to it. It is also bright at mag +1.0 compared with Delta at mag +3.9 and Gamma at mag +4.6. Meanwhile Jupiter outshines them all at mag -1.9 and dominates the morning sky until Venus rises a few hours before sunrise. Note Jupiter is also shown for October 11th.



NIGHTSCENES - OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2026

November sees Mars overtake Jupiter then pass north of Regulus. For the first half of the month it is catching up and closing the distance but on November 15th Mars lies due north of Jupiter; this is called a conjunction.

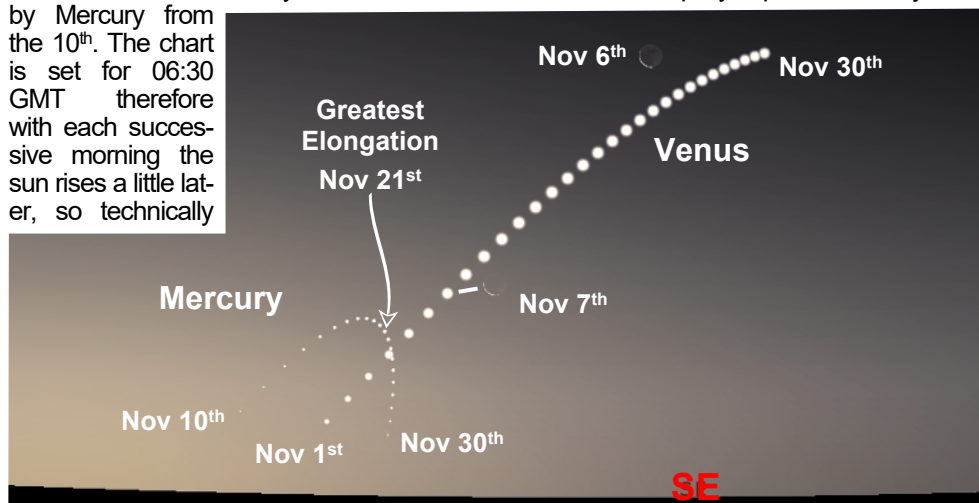
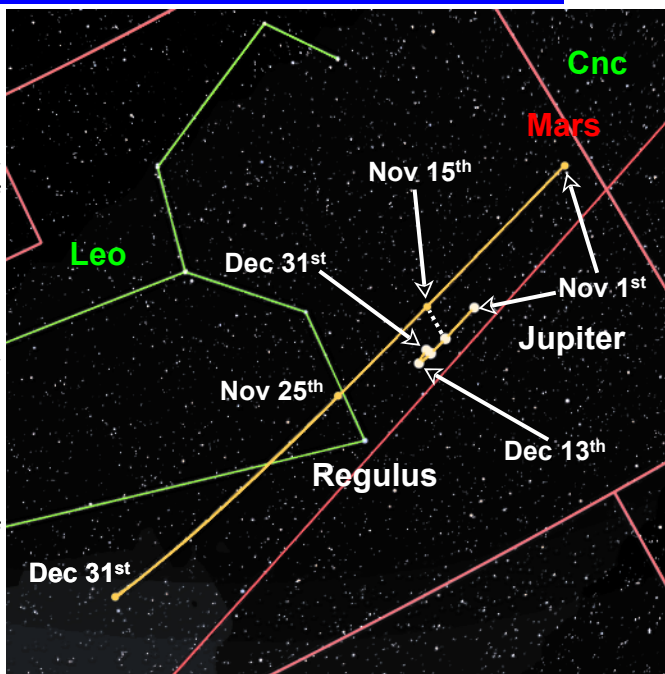
Mars then continues past the gas giant planet and lies north of Regulus on the morning of November 25th.

Technically the conjunction with the star occurs the previous evening but they are below the horizon at that point so the actual time of conjunction isn't visible. This is why often in Nightscenes we don't refer to events as conjunctions unless it can actually be viewed, otherwise such events are referred to in a simpler form such as a close encounter or they are 'near to each other'.

Whilst Mars races away from both Jupiter and Regulus, Jupiter's motion has been slowing and it reaches a stationary point on December 13th after which it begins retrograde motion against the background stars, hence on December 31st it appears to be receding from Regulus.

We're getting closer to the morning twilight but over the three months the period of darkness at night has become longer as we head towards the Winter Solstice. This has helped Venus climb out of the twilight at the start of November to become the bright **morning star**. The chart below is set for the same time each morning throughout November, 06:30 GMT, at the start of November this is ~ 20 minutes before sunrise so do be careful if you try to look for it with optical aid. Venus emerges from the solar glare at the very end of October and is very low down but from November 1st rapidly improves and is joined

by Mercury from the 10th. The chart is set for 06:30 GMT therefore with each successive morning the sun rises a little later, so technically



NIGHTSCENES - OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2026

the sky gets darker, but for the purposes of our illustration, this highlights why we see Mercury low down in twilight whilst Venus can move up into darker skies as the month progresses. November is a good apparition for Mercury if you like early mornings and have a clear, uncluttered east to south east horizon. It is always brighter at the end of each morning apparition going from +1.6 on November 10th to -0.7 on December 12th but by then it will be very low in the twilight and probably lost to view.

Venus climbs higher into the darker sky and if we now chart it in relation to the *background stars* instead of to a set time we see it does something interesting. Its actual motion against the stars sees it swing round Spica before heading back - not literally as Spica is ~ 250 ly away! This is a closer view than the wide angle view earlier so we now see the encounter with the slim Crescent Moon on November 7th and again on December 4th in a new light. We also see on November 19th Venus is north of Spica and is a little higher in the morning twilight and so easier to view.



Our final two charts (both set for 06:30 GMT) show two moments in time but ~ a month apart looking towards the SE morning sky. If NightScenes tried to show the Venus and Mercury, stars, constellations and changes in twilight in one chart, it would be a confusing mess so these charts show another way of illustrating such events. In this case the upper

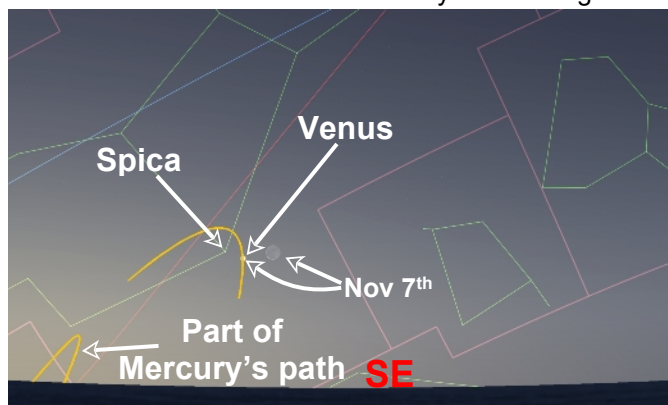
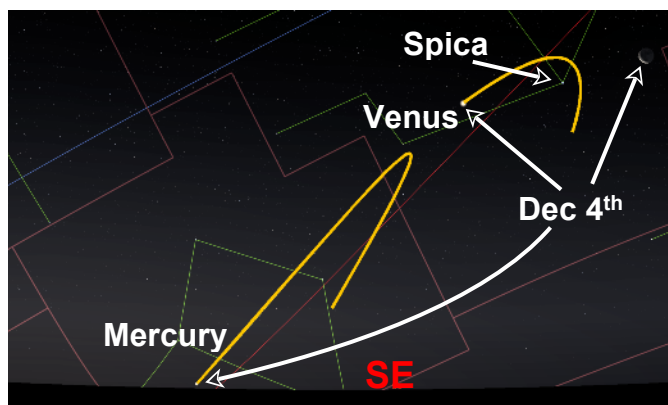


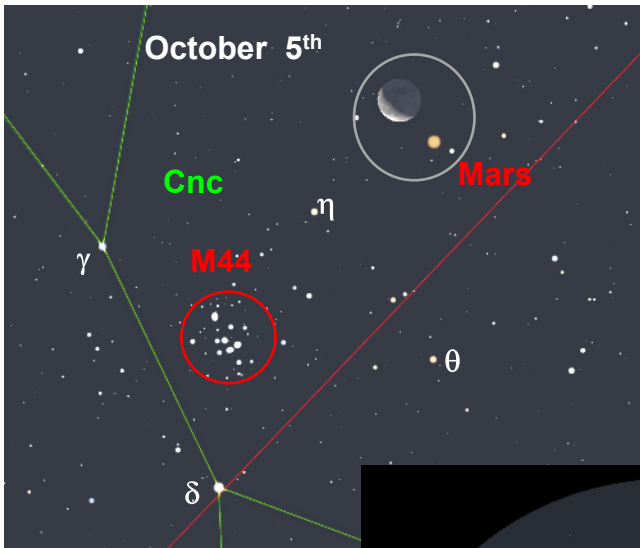
chart is set for November 7th with Venus and the Moon together *but* although part of the path of Mercury is shown, Mercury itself is not above the horizon on Nov 7th.

The second chart is set for December 4th and shows that Venus is higher and in a darker sky with the Crescent Moon off to its slight upper right whilst Mercury is just rising to their lower left and almost at the end of its apparition. Give it another thirty minutes and Mercury will be better placed, higher in the sky but by then, in a twilight sky.

Now imagine trying to merge those two charts together! You can see why the author has to decide how to illustrate twilight events and which is the best way!



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As our Moon orbits the Earth at some stage it has to pass bright stars, planets and even selected deep sky objects. In most cases it glides past them either north or south (forming a conjunction) or perhaps the event happens when it is not viewable from our shores at night. But sometimes the Moon passes in front of such objects at the right time and so we get to see what are called occultations, the Moon occults the target.

Here we highlight some of

the lunar events to look out for during October to December starting with a close encounter with Mars on October 5th in the early hours leading up to twilight. This is a view at right simulated through an 8 inch Dobsonian at 30x magnification showing both in the field of view at ~ 06:00 BST. The wide view above shows they both lie to the upper right of M44, the Beehive cluster in Cancer the Crab.

Below: on October 28th the Moon occults some of the uppermost stars of M45, the Pleiades star cluster in Taurus.



Watch from ~ midnight through to 02:00 GMT as the Moon occults some of the stars on the bright limb then watch as each one reappears on the dark limb. The bright moonlight will wash out most of the fainter members but the primary bright cluster stars should be viewable.

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November 5th



υ

Disappearance

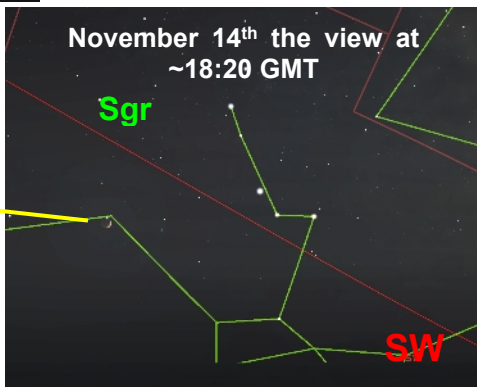
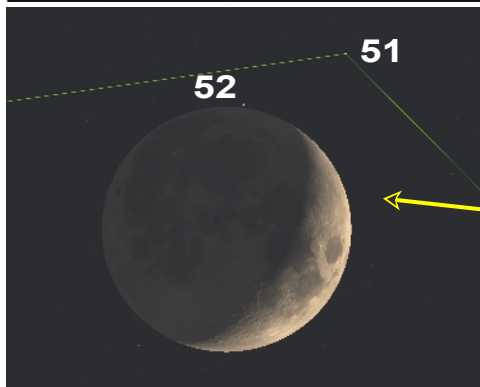
Into November and on the morning of the 5th the Crescent Moon occults Upsilon (υ) Leonis. The star is naked eye at mag +4.3 so easily visible in binoculars and telescopes. Begin looking ~ 04:30 GMT or ideally at least 10 to 15 minutes before as times vary depending on your location. For the reappearance that should be ~ 05:20 GMT, again always begin looking out for it popping out from behind the dark limb earlier so as not to miss the event. Notice that at reappearance two fainter stars (HD 100975 mag +7.7 and HD 101016 mag +8.4) will appear from behind the northern half of the lunar disk so you may want to keep an eye out for those too although the brighter of the pair may well reappear at the same time or close to it as Upsilon!



υ

Reappearance

Next up is a short duration occultation of 52 Sagittarii (mag +4.5) on November 14th, this time in the early evening SW sky. The wide field chart at bottom right shows the constellation and general position relative to the SW horizon at the start of the occultation. Between Newcastle and Edinburgh the event will be a grazing occultation but reappearance for the rest of the UK south of there occurs with the Moon very low so an uncluttered horizon is vital if you wish to view all of the event. Begin at 18:15 GMT, the further south you are then the longer will be the disappearance and for the authors location reappearance is ~ 19:00 GMT. At least disappearance is on the dark limb and reappearance on the bright limb making the start more interesting than the end!



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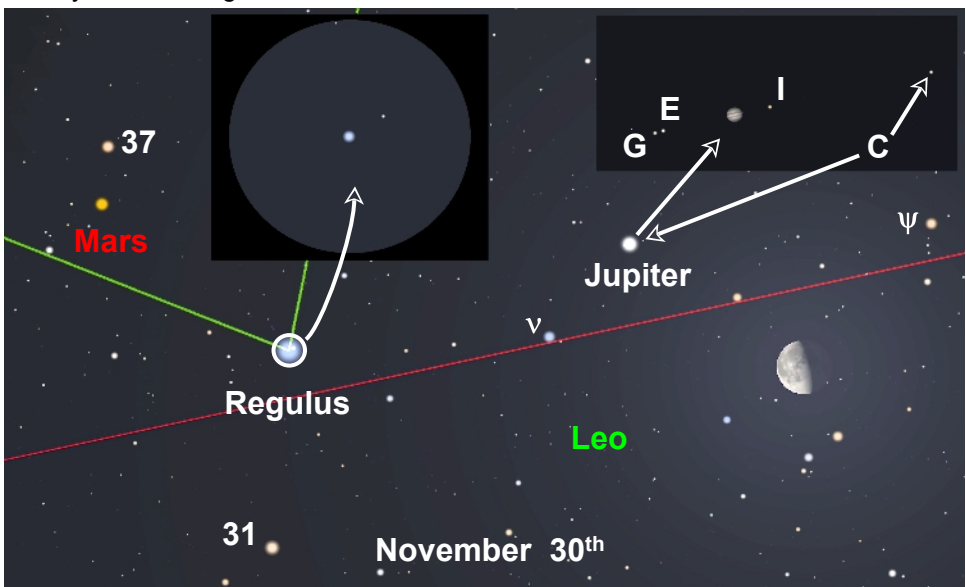


Next up: the Moon occults M44, the Beehive cluster on November 28th in the late evening up to midnight. Look high up above the ESE horizon, naturally, the Moon cannot be missed - unless it is cloudy, in that case, go to bed!

The view here is shown hourly from 22:00 GMT until midnight and the fainter stars will be washed out by the strong moonlight. However, watching our Moon as it slowly occults each star in turn reminds us we are seeing the solar system in motion against the background

of more distant stars.

November 30th and we find in the hour before morning twilight the almost Last Quarter Moon lies near to Jupiter with Regulus and Mars off to their left for a nice gathering of celestial bodies. The Moon will have lots of detail to explore but at the same time take a look at Regulus as it has a companion to its upper right which is shown better in the telescope view at ~175x magnification. Meanwhile on the wider chart you can also see one of Jupiter's moons whereas the inset shows that all four of the Galilean moons can be seen with a telescope: Ganymede, Europa, Io and Callisto. Look out for the bands on Jupiter too whilst you are looking at it.



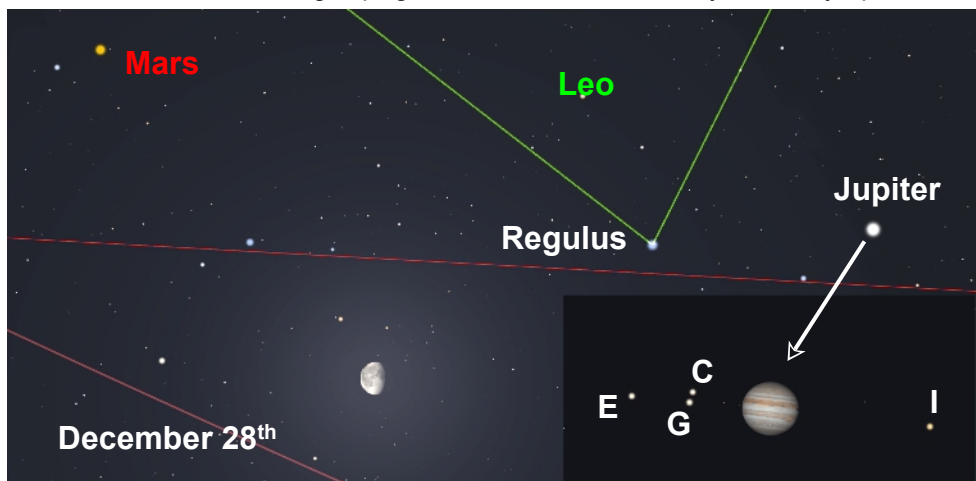
NIGHTSCENES - OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2026



We're going through a great phase where two major star clusters are being occulted fairly regularly during the year and into 2027. On December 21st from 22:00 GMT it's the turn of M45, the Pleiades star cluster as the Moon sweeps up, occulting some of the right hand stars as we look at it. By midnight the occulted stars will have been uncovered. You could be forgiven for asking why the Moon doesn't occult the clusters every month but it's down to timing

and whether the event occurs when they are above the horizon. So sometimes the Moon will lie either side of the clusters on successive evenings/morning and the other side of the planet gets to see the occultation instead.

We have another nice grouping of the Moon and two easy naked eye planets on



December 28th around 06:00 GMT when the Moon, Jupiter, Regulus and Mars come together. Although Mars is showing a small disk, with high magnification you might glimpse its north polar cap. Jupiter is interesting as, apart from its belts, the Galilean moons are in an interesting configuration. Ganymede is actually on the far side of Jupiter whereas Callisto is on the earthward side of the giant planet. Callisto's shadow is cast onto the right hand side of Jupiter's disk and about to move off as Callisto is moving slowly to the right. Ganymede is moving to the left so for a short while Callisto appears to lie above Ganymede. If you are really keen then begin viewing the planet with a telescope from 01:15 GMT to watch Callisto's shadow creep onto, and move across, the face of Jupiter. Note, although the Red Spot appears to be visible on the close up of Jupiter, it drifts in longitude over time and so may not be on view on the actual date of the event.

NIGHTSCENES - OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2026

Also look out for the following:

October:

- 1st Moon forms triangle with M45 and Uranus in Taurus (morning)
- 4th Moon forms triangle with Castor and Pollux in Gemini (morning)
- 5th Crescent Moon lies above and close to Mars in Cancer (morning)
- 6th Crescent Moon lies above right of Jupiter (morning)
- 7th Crescent Moon lies below Regulus in Leo (morning)
- 16th Thick Crescent Moon lies above Gamma Sagittarii (evening twilight)
- 17th Moon lies between Tau and Sigma Sagittarii (evening twilight)
- 20th Moon forms shallow triangle with Gamma and Iota Capricorni (evening)
- 21st Moon lies inside triangle formed by Theta, Iota and Sigma Aquarii (evening)
- 23rd Moon lies between Circlet asterism of Pisces and Neptune (evening)
- 24th Moon lies near Delta Piscium and forms triangle with Saturn & Neptune (evening)
- 29th Moon forms triangle with Horns of Taurus, Beta (El Nath) & Zeta Tauri (evening)
- 30th Moon lies to left of Mebsuta, Epsilon Geminorum (evening)
- 31st Moon forms line with Pollux and Castor in Gemini (late evening)

November:

- 2nd Last Quarter Moon lines up with Mars, Jupiter and Regulus (early morning)
- 3rd Moon forms triangle with Jupiter & Regulus with Mars above them (morning) / Venus is due south & in conjunction with Spica (morning twilight)
- 5th Crescent Moon forms triangle with Zavijava & Nu Virginis (morning twilight)
- 6th Crescent Moon lies below right of Porrima in Virgo (morning twilight)
- 13th Crescent Moon lies close to and slightly below Phi Sagittarii (evening twilight)
- 16th Moon forms shallow triangle with Iota & Theta Capricorni (evening)
- 17th First Quarter Moon lies near Iota Aquarii (evening)
- 18th Moon lies near Lambda Aquarii (evening)
- 19th Moon lies below Circlet asterism of Pisces (evening)
- 20th Moon forms triangle with Saturn and Neptune (evening)
- 24th Moon lies to lower right of M45 & Uranus (morning) / Full Moon lies to left of M45 & Uranus (evening)
- 25th Moon lies near to El Nath, Beta Tauri (evening)
- 27th Moon lies near to Mebsuta, Epsilon Geminorum (morning)
- 28th Moon lies near to Kappa Geminorum & Pollux (morning)
- 30th Moon forms line with Jupiter & Mars, with Regulus below right of Mars (morning)

December:

- 3rd Thick Crescent Moon lies below right of Porrima in Virgo (morning twilight)
- 5th Crescent Moon forms triangle with Spica & Venus (morning twilight)
- 6th Slim Crescent Moon below right of Zuben El Genubi (morning twilight)
- 7th Slim Crescent Moon below right of Mercury in bright morning twilight
- 13th Crescent Moon lies to lower right of Theta Capricorni (evening twilight)
- 14th Thick Crescent Moon lies above Delta Capricorni (evening twilight)
- 15th Moon lies above Sigma Aquarii (evening)
- 17th First Quarter Moon lies above Neptune with Saturn to their left (evening)
- 18th Moon forms triangle with Delta & Epsilon Piscium with Saturn below right (evening)
- 19th Moon lies near to Eta Piscium (evening)
- 21st As Moon begins to occult M45, Uranus lies below them (evening)
- 24th Full Moon forms triangle with Castor and Pollux (evening)
- 27th Moon lies to upper right of Jupiter & Regulus (morning)
- 28th Moon lies below Regulus with Jupiter to upper right and Mars to lower left (morning)
- 30th Last Quarter Moon, Zaniah (Eta Virginis) & Porrima form triangle (morning)

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Constellations and their abbreviations

	Latin name	Abbreviation	Common name	Star usage (e.g. α Arietis)
1	Andromeda	And	The Chained Maiden or The Princess	Andromedae
2	Aquarius	Aqr	The Water Carrier	Aquarii
3	Aquila	Aql	The Eagle	Aquilae
4	Aries	Ari	The Ram	Arietis
5	Auriga	Aur	The Charioteer	Aurigae
6	Boötes	Boo	The Herdsman	Bootis
7	Camelopardalis	Cam	The Giraffe	Camelopardalis
8	Cancer	Cnc	The Crab	Cancrī
9	Canes Venatici	CVn	The Hunting Dogs	Canum Venaticorum
10	Canis Major	CMA	The Great Dog	Canis Majoris
11	Canis Minor	CMi	The Little Dog	Canis Minoris
12	Capricornus	Cap	The Sea Goat	Capricorni
13	Cassiopeia	Cas	The Queen	Cassiopeiae
14	Cepheus	Cep	The King	Cephei
15	Cetus	Cet	The Whale	Ceti
16	Coma Berenices	Com	The Hair of Berenices	Comae Berenices
17	Corona Borealis	CrB	The Northern Crown	Coronae Borealis
18	Corvus	Crv	The Crow	Corvi
19	Crater	Cra	The Cup	Crateris
20	Cygnus	Cyg	The Swan	Cygni
21	Delphinus	Del	The Dolphin	Delphini
22	Draco	Dra	The Dragon	Draconis
23	Equuleus	Equ	The Little Horse	Equulei
24	Eridanus*	Eri	The River Eridanus	Eridani
25	Gemini	Gem	The Twins	Geminorum
26	Hercules	Her	Hercules (the Hero)	Herculis
27	Hydra	Hya	The Snake	Hydrae
28	Lacerta	Lac	The Lizard	Lacertae
29	Leo	Leo	The Lion	Leonis
30	Leo Minor	LMi	The Little Lion	Leo Minoris
31	Lepus	Lep	The Hare	Leporis
32	Libra	Lib	The Scales	Librae
33	Lynx	Lyn	The Lynx	Lyncis
34	Lyra	Lyr	The Lyre	Lyrae
35	Monoceros	Mon	The Unicorn	Monocerotis
36	Ophiuchus	Oph	The Serpent Bearer	Ophiuchi
37	Orion	Ori	The Hunter	Orionis
38	Pegasus	Peg	The Flying or Winged Horse	Pegasi
39	Perseus	Per	Perseus the Hero	Persei

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Constellations and their abbreviations

	Latin name	Abbreviation	Common name	Star usage (e.g. α Arietis)
40	Pisces	Psc	The Fish	Piscium
41	Puppis	Pup	The Poop	Puppis
42	Sagitta	Sge	The Arrow	Sagittae
43	Sagittarius	Sgr	The Archer	Sagittarii
44	Scorpius	Sco	The Scorpion	Scorpii
45	Scutum	Sct	The Shield	Scuti
46	Serpens Caput**	Ser	The Head of the Serpent	Serpentis
46	Serpens Cauda**	Ser	The Tail of the Serpent	Serpentis
47	Sextans	Sex	The Sextant	Sextantis
48	Taurus	Tau	The Bull	Tauri
49	Triangulum	Tri	The Triangle	Trianguli
50	Ursa Major	UMa	The Great Bear	Ursae Majoris
51	Ursa Minor	UMi	The Little Bear	Ursae Minoris
52	Virgo	Vir	The Virgin	Virginis
53	Vulpecula	Vul	The Fox	Vulpeculae
* Eridanus is a large winter constellation with the bottom half not visible from the UK				
** Serpens is considered one constellation but split in two and either side of the Serpent Bearer: Ophiuchus				
The following constellations are low down and not all viewable from Northern UK latitudes e.g. Grus & Corona Australis are not visible from Inverness at all.				
54	Sculptor	Scl	The Sculptor	Sculptoris
55	Fornax	For	The Furnace	Fornacis
56	Pyxis	Pyx	The Mariners Compass	Pyxidis
57	Antlia	Ant	The Pump	Antliae
58	Piscis Austrinus	PsA	The Southern Fish	Piscis Austrini
59	Caelum	Cae	The Chisel	Caeli
60	Microscopium	Mic	The Microscope	Microscopii
61	Centaurus	Cen	The Centaur	Centauri
62	Lupus	Lup	The Wolf	Lupi
63	Columba	Col	The Dove	Columbae
64	Grus	Gru	The Crane	Gruis
65	Corona Australis	CrA	The Southern Crown	Coronae Australis

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Astrospace Talks and Lectures



The author has been giving astronomy based talks since 1982 (he started when he was 2 yrs old - nah, only kidding!) All are set at a level that any group can enjoy them even if the topic seems technical.

These talks are available to any group within Lincolnshire, the UK and Ireland depending upon distance/travelling conditions etc. Societies and clubs are particularly encouraged to book for an interesting exploration of our Universe in all its splendour.

If you wish to book me to give a talk then do so using the contact details near the front of the book.

Astronomical and Non Astro Societies (Photo and camera clubs/societies, other Clubs, Groups, WI's, Scouts/Guides etc).

Zoom/online talks all cost £50 per talk payable via online banking.

In person talks up to a 2 hour drive are now available, however due to personal circumstances I am pretty much restricted to a maximum of 2 hours drive away to a society so if you are further than this then the talk will have to be online via Zoom.

Cost of in person talks to be discussed when booking and depends on the distance travelled and time needed for travelling.

All talks are fully illustrated & last approximately 1 hour in length but can be adjusted to suit individual requirements (within reason!). Please note however that I will not cut a talk down to just 1/2 an hour as this does not do the topics justice!

Details of the current talks available can be found on the Astrospace Talks page of our website:

<https://www.astrospace.co.uk/Astrospace-Talks.html>

or the Astrospace Talks Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/AstrospaceTalks>

Bookings will be taken on a first come first served basis.

Astronomy publications from Astrospace

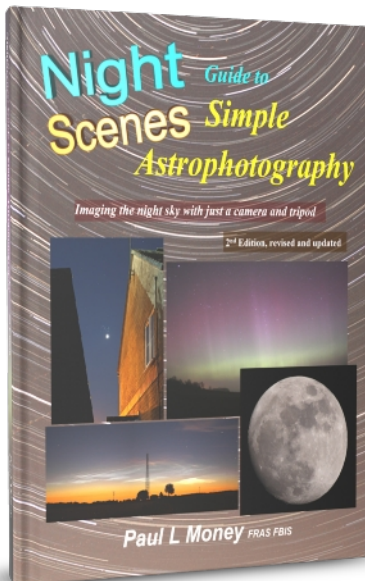
NightScenes: Guide to Simple Astrophotography 2nd edition.

NightScenes: Guide to Simple Astrophotography shows you don't have to have a telescope in order to capture many naked eye aspects of the night sky with a camera. Presented as the authors journey taking simple astrophotographs from the humble SLR through DSLR and now smart phone imaging, the book is suitable for beginners rather than experienced astrophotographers.

This is a guide for anyone getting started on imaging the wide field night sky with simple equipment. With a wide variety of cameras, many of the techniques are also applicable to the increasingly more sophisticated smart phone cameras and in this 2nd edition two new chapters have been added covering simple smartphone astrophotography. Topics covered include basic camera settings, constellations, how to image the planets against the backdrop of the stars, imaging the Moon and its phases, capturing Aurora, Noctilucent clouds and much, much more!

Kindle: <https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B0CZJC887G>

Print: <https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B0CZJDB2HM>



Canon C50D DSLR (left) and R6 Mirrorless camera (right)
to like them and their features! Astrophotographers tend to use Canon, Nikon or Sony cameras as a rule but many other makes are now coming to the fore but the above three seem to dominate at the time of writing.



Canon C50D DSLR Fixed LCD display (left) and R6 Mirrorless tilt-able display (right)

Let's take a look at some of the features we will likely use when taking our astrophotos. Camera setting displays are often found either on the upper right and/or on the back display. Most cameras have a basic range of buttons that help you set various functions and a menu display with further functions that are useful for basic astrophotography. They also usually have a Camera setting wheel for choosing a range of basic settings as shown in Fig 2.7.

This is where you normally find the Manual 'M' or Bulb 'B' setting and so you should select either of these settings for taking astrophotos but do check with your camera manual for exact

Suggested further Astro books by friends of Astrospace



Guide to Deep Sky Stacker.

Affinity Astrophotography Image Processing Guide.

Photoshop Astrophotography Image Processing Guide.

High Resolution Lunar & Planet Imaging.

All by Dave Eagle

<https://www.star-gazing.co.uk/shop>

<https://www.star-gazing.co.uk>

Making Every Photon Count

A Beginner's Guide to Deep Sky Astro-photography

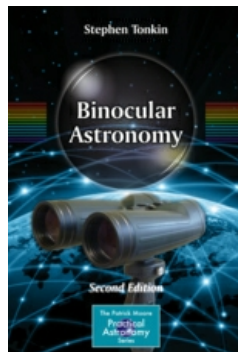
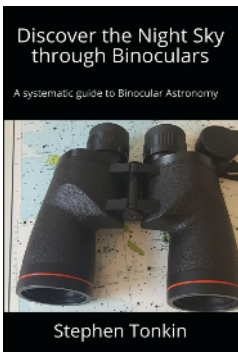
Dark Art or Magic Bullet?

A Beginner's Guide to Deep Sky Image Processing

Both by Steve Richards



<https://chanctonburyobservatory.wordpress.com>



Discover the Night Sky through Binoculars

and

**Binocular Astronomy,
2nd Edition**

both by Stephen Tonkin

https://binocularsky.com/binoc_books.php

Novels from Astrospace Fiction

Something for many tastes from Ghost Mysteries to Science Fiction Soap Operas to Apocalyptic series and even young romance /growing up novels all available as Kindle or kindle print editions with some now as audiobooks.

More details of all the books can be found at:

<https://www.astrospace.co.uk/Fiction/>



The StarVista 4 Saga

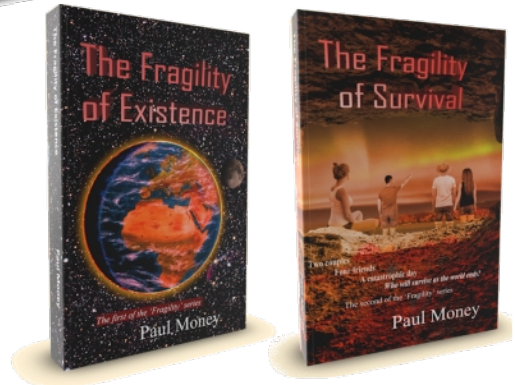
A Space Soap Opera trilogy.

Series link:

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B0BZ9XDX2S>

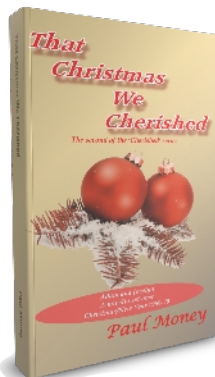
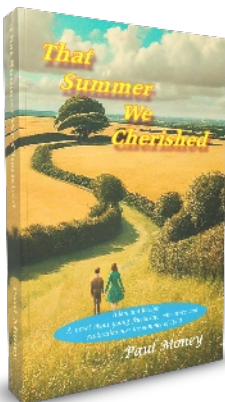
The Fragility Series

The Fragility of Existence
The Fragility of Survival



Fragility series link:

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B0BZT7LVSC>



The 'Cherished' Series

That Summer We Cherished
That Christmas We Cherished

Series link:

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B0G3L2977J>

Book three: **"Those Memories We Cherished"** coming soon!

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Novels from Astrospace Fiction

The James Hansone Ghost Mysteries



Book 1: **A Ghostly Diversion**

Book 2: **Secrets of Grasceby Manor**

Book 3: **Return to De Grasceby and the Return of Helen.**

Book 4: **James and the Air of Tragedy**

Book 5: **The Haunting of Grasceby Rectory and the Devon Mystery**

Book 6: **Spectre of the Grasceby Flier**

Book 7: **The Haunting of Lady Grasceby**

Book 8: **The Ghosts of Borrow Hall and the Lake District Mysteries**

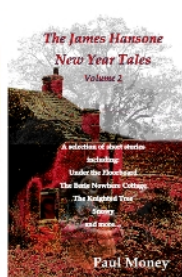
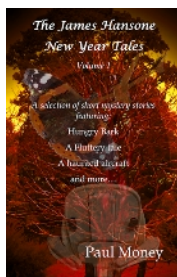
Coming soon: Book 9: **The Ghost with the Flat Cap** details to be announced.

Series link: <https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B08K94ZZJJ>

Also available: Two volumes of short stories based on the main characters found in the James Hansone Ghost Mysteries, this is a collection of short stories of ghostly, supernatural and mysterious events recounted by some of the regular characters.

The James Hansone New Year Tales Vol 1

The James Hansone New Year Tales Vol 2



Astrospace Fiction Audiobooks

Many of the Astrospace Fiction novels have now been produced as Audible audiobooks so if you prefer that format the following are now available with more to be recorded soon.

James Hansone Ghost Mysteries series link:

<https://www.audible.co.uk/series/James-Hansone-Ghost-Mysteries-Audiobooks/B0F84CP5GM>

Fragility series link:

<https://www.audible.co.uk/series/Fragility-Series-Audiobooks/B0G2X7VZPZ>

That Summer We Cherished link:

<https://www.audible.co.uk/pd/That-Summer-We-Cherished-Audiobook/B0G3YNH29C>

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My Observing Journal

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About the Author



Paul L Money is happily married to Lorraine and has always had an interest and fascination with space and science ever since he saw 'Lost in Space', 'Star Trek' and 'Thunderbirds' as a child. He loved reading Science Fiction by Arthur C Clarke and Edmund Cooper amongst many other authors and dreamed of travelling into space. Alas, an astronaut he was not to be and the harsh realities of finding work and a secondary interest in archaeology diverted his attention away from space for a time.

However in 1980 he discovered a local astronomical group, Boston Astronomers and astronomy completely took over his life. Working in retail (Marks and Spencer) by day, he began giving talks on astronomy and space from 1982 which continue to the present with often over 100 speaking engagements per year. Since 1984 he is a Fellow of the British Interplanetary Society and in

1991 was elected a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society.

In 1981 he attended a BAA (British Astronomical Association) astronomy weekend held in his home town of Horncastle and, after becoming a BAA member in 1985, was invited to take over running the 'Horncastle Astronomy Weekend' and organising it most years in September.

Paul also featured as an astrophotographer in an episode of the Astronomy TV series 'Heavenly Bodies' hosted by Peter Davison which was broadcast by the BBC in 1995. Since 2000 he has written this annual night sky guide: Nightscenes which continued until the pandemic brought it to an end. This edition tests the water to see if it can be revived. There is also a 'Guide to Simple Astrophotography' 2nd edition and NightScenes Companion. In 2002 he was awarded the Eric Zuker award by the FAS (Federation of Astronomical Societies) for his public promotion of astronomy and space and in 2012 was awarded the Sir Arthur Clarke Lifetime Achievement award by the BROHP (British Rocketry Oral History Project) being nominated by his good friend Ryan Laird. Paul is occasionally asked on to BBC Radio Lincolnshire and BBC Look North to talk about aspects of astronomy and space.

In 2007 he left Marks and Spencer after 27 years to go freelance and enjoys the self employed life allowing him to also spend more time with Lorraine. Paul has written articles for Astronomy Now and from 2006 to 2024 was the Reviews Editor for the BBC Sky at Night Magazine. From 2004 until spring 2013 he was also one of three guest astronomers for the Omega Holidays Northern Lights Flights and was a Solar Eclipse astronomer for their Turkey 2006 and China 2009 Solar Eclipse trips. In 2008 he was also the Solar Eclipse astronomer for Poseidon Arctic Voyages, travelling to the North Pole on the Russian Nuclear Ice Breaker 'Yamal'.

Paul also fulfilled his ambition of publishing his first novel: '*A Ghostly Diversion*' in 2016 (briefly a kindle best seller) which spawned 'The James Hansone Ghost Mysteries' series. Apocalyptic novels along with a space opera trilogy and even young friendship/romance novels have also been published with more on the way!

More information on Paul (and Lorraine) can be found on our Astrospace web site: <https://www.astrospace.co.uk> as well as on [Facebook](#)

NightScenes 2026 Bonus

A monthly guide to astronomical events for July to December

Your full colour guide to what to look out for in the night sky set for the UK and Ireland but can be used for similar northern latitudes. With details of planetary conjunctions, lunar conjunctions, meteor showers and much more to view either with the naked eye, binoculars and in some cases with a small telescope.

Designed for anyone to use and explore the night sky from naked eye to binocular/small telescope use.

Back cover: The Andromeda galaxy, M31 and its two companions. Taken on January 2nd 2025 with a WO RC61 WIFD Refractor, Canon R8 Camera on a Star Adventurer tracking mount.

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